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FRED<sup>IC</sup> PARKER









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**THE**  
**DIARY OF A JUDGE**

**BY**

**HENRY R. ADDISON, F. S. A.**

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**BRUSSELS.**

**BELGIAN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING SOCIETY,**

**HAUMAN AND COMP.**

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**1838**





TO

**John Burley Esq<sup>re</sup>.**

*To you who first urged me to lay aside the pen of a Dramatic writer and attempt to compose a series of tales. To you who have encouraged me in this my first attempt at Volume writing. To you, do I inscribe and dedicate the following trifle ; as a public tribute of my gratitude, for past kindnesses ; a small mark of the estimation in which I hold your friendship.*

*I have thought it better (in accordance with the title of my work) to clothe my historiettes in the garb of*

*a translation ; but to you , I confess them to be strictly original. To the mantle of truth I have perhaps added a slight embroidery of fiction ; I have concealed names, and altered dates ; but in the leading incidents, I have rigidly adhered to matters of fact.*

*If I give you , or any of my other readers , an hour's amusement, I shall feel amply repaid for my trouble—If I fail in this ; I must (like the penitent schoolboy) try and do better another time—And in the interim subscribe myself.*

*Your most faithful friend and relative.*

H. R. A.

*Brussels , January 1858.*

## PREFACE.

The incidents narrated in this work have been carefully extracted from the note book of the Baron de \* \* \* \* \* who for several years acted as a Judge, during the reign of Napoléon. Subsequent circumstances, brought about by political intrigue, induced him to tender his resignation, which was accepted with avidity by the House of Bourbon. Deprived of his rank and functions, the old noble could no longer bear to remain in France, where every hour brought some insult to his feelings and his party. Possessed of a small competence, he sought this

Country as a haven of rest , exclaiming , with the immortal Bard , in all the pangs of blighted patriotism ,

« Ingrata Patria, non possidebis ossa mea. »

In Devonshire , he hired a neat little residence. Here it was my good fortune to make his acquaintance. Here I strove to pour the balm of condolence into his afflicted soul ; but it was of no avail. Torn from his home, his friends , he hourly declined. He once or twice mingled in society ; but the calumnies he there heard uttered against his benefactor and patron (for be it known to the rising generation that, in 1816, a hatred to Napoléon was essential to British patriotism) made him shun all intercourse with the surrounding gentry. Unknowing and unknown, he lived to hear the details of the last French revolution. In Louis-Philippe however, he refused to confide. — For though a people's choice , yet Philippe was a Bourbon born ; a

race depicted by my friend as being either Tyrants or Dupes.

It was my melancholy task , last Year , to consign this really excellent old man to the silent tomb. To me he left his little Library, a ring of value, which he had received , in token of approbation from the Emperor, and his papers. Amongst the latter, I found his official note book. From it I have selected the following pages. But as I cannot boast of being a perfect Linguist, I have at once to bespeak from the reader his kind indulgence should he perceive, in these extracts, those inaccuracies which will inevitably creep into every work of translation; more especially, when that translation is , as in the present case , the work of.

An untried Author.

North Devon , November 1837.





## SALEMBIER.

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Bruges.

. . . . .  
Apropos to this subject, I think it right to note a case, which occurred here in 1798; from which, as I have now some leisure hours, I will give a full extract. It appears, about that time, that this country was held in terror by a Banditti, known by the appellation of the Black gang! Their force turned out to amount, in all, to 96, at least that number were convicted. They were organized regularly as soldiers; divided into three or four companies; acting simultaneously, in different parts; committing murders at distant points, at the same instant; they were looked upon as little short of preternatural Beings. That some person of rank, must direct their movements was evident; that some person mingling in society must conduct their plans, was universally believed. Victim, after victim, fell, with unerring success. The rich were plundered and destroyed; their journeys always foreseen, however secretly undertaken. Their letters and couriers continually intercepted. The people almost feared that some infernal power protected, and assisted, this dreaded Band.

Justice at length, however, overtook this sanguinary body—But I will give an episode from their history: ere I proceed to tell their fate.



# SALEMBIER.

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## CHAPTER I.

All was gaiety beneath the hospitable roof of the Count de Salembier, one of the most "recherché" party givers in Bruges. The brilliant lights, the enlivening music, the handsome uniforms of the military, and still more handsome faces of the Flemish Belles now present, gave to the view of the

beholder a good specimen of refined revelry. The eager card player, the gay dancer, the philosopher and the roué, each found, an unusual attraction in the elegant circle of their much admired entertainer, whose invitation, or rejection, stamped, with the hand of fashion, or exclusion, the aspirants to ton who thronged this once proud city.

Count Salembier, at the time I speak of, was considered one of the handsomest men in West Flanders, possessing almost boundless wealth, inherited (it was supposed) from a distant relation who had died in India; manners the most insinuating, and a general knowledge not to be surpassed, rendered him indeed an object worth the winning; and many therefore were the hearts, who sighed, in sullen envy, when it was announced that the party, now given, was in honour of his *betrothed*; for so he now publicly called Anna di Jæillot—who, on this evening shone the fairest of the fair, the gayest of the gay, while she smilingly

received their warm, yet insincere congratulations.

Ten, o'clock had struck, and the ball was at its height (for the hours here are earlier than elsewhere) when the abrupt entrance of Captain Villedieu, in the service dress of his regiment, startled the assembled group. None were usually more punctilious, in the etiquette of the toilette, than the gay dragoon, all therefore crowded round the officer to learn the cause of his appearance, in this rough attire, this anything but ball-room guise.

"I come, I fear most inopportunately, to disturb your mirth," at length uttered Villedieu. "The cause you shall know ere long," and he drew Salembier aside. They whispered for an instant, and the Count returned; consulted for a moment with an aged noble; desired the music instantly to cease, and hastened to hand into her carriage his fair betrothed, who evidently was much surprised at this sudden desire on the part of Salembier to break up the party. — In a moment more,

their host re-entering the ball room, where the late gay dancers stood almost petrified, thus explained the cause at once of his seeming agitation, and his abrupt wish to cease the revel.

“ My friends, I scarcely know how to tell my tale of woe ; for many there are, here present, connected with him, who has just been murdered. ” The company started, and a murmur of horror went round. “ Yes—it is but too true. The Black Gang who, for years, have cursed this country with their presence, have destroyed another victim. Within three miles of Ghent, I learn from my friend, that the father of my betrothed has been assassinated. His servant, who escaped, arrived in trembling haste at Villedieu’s lodgings, not ten minutes since, with information of the fact. His reeking horse, bears testimony that two hours have scarcely passed, since this band destroyed before his eyes, his loved, his valued master ! he, who would have been to me a Parent : ” and a tear rolled down the cheek of the agitated

speaker. " My friends , but one consolation, if it may so be called , is now left ; to discover and punish, the perpetrator of this bloody deed. —For this purpose , Villedieu , with a chosen party, is about to depart, while I seek my room and try to soothe my poignant feelings of distress. I therefore need not I am sure , apologise for breaking up the fete ; for even yet , I fear , we have not learnt the extent of our misfortunes. Strange it is to say, but no less true ; this Band of murderers, ( may curses light upon them ) have never yet been known to commit a *single* murder. Invariably it has occurred, that simultaneous with their atrocities in one part of the country, they have sealed their savage nature , by deeds of the most revolting kind, at distances of several leagues ; thus proving their almost ubiquitous presence ; their well digested plans of action. May Heaven grant we hear not of their exploits in some other parts ere morning. "

A deep and sincere " amen " was pronounced by all present, and while the wretched Count sought the solitude of his Chamber , Villedieu



and the company, now as fearfully depressed, as they had previously been elated, departed some to scour the country; others to think, and dream, of the murderous Black Gang.

Another half hour had elapsed. The almost ever sounding carillon of the belfrey was chiming the eleventh hour, as a single horseman rode through the "porte d'Ostende." But so closely muffled were his features, so completely hidden was his form by a long horseman's cloak, that the sleepy warden, when afterwards interrogated, declared his utter inability to describe the person of him, who now slowly left the western gate of Bruges, at a steady ambling pace. The Barrier however passed, the second bridge crossed, the small hamlet of Skipsdale left behind and the more open country gained, the horseman suddenly burying his military spurs in his proud animal's side, in another instant, had leaped the wide ditch which skirted the road, and riding to a certain point, some quarter of a league from the beaten path, suddenly halted, jumped off, and placing

a small whistle to his lips, blew a peculiar low, yet shrill, signal. In a moment more, that signal was answered, and in the next minute, a second horseman joined the traveller of whom we speak. A word of recognition; and at once they proceeded to business.

“Have you succeeded in the west?”

“Yes Captain, though we lost poor Jacques in the *melée*; the old merchant made a most unexpected resistance, while his servant, ere we had time to finish him, had drawn a pistol and shot our comrade, almost to death.”

“Poor fellow! I’m sorry for him,” and he sighed; then suddenly changing his tone, “But what have you done with him?”

“We obeyed the rule, and, as his wound seemed mortal, we at once despatched him, mutilated his features, and those of the servant who had shot him, tied the two bodies together, and threw them into the canal, where they will rot, long ere they are discovered, as we tied an iron weight

to them, to keep them down. Then according to your orders, we let loose their horses, packed up the corpse of the old gentleman, and started off across the country for Blankenberg. We popped the carcass into the haunted ruin near the village, where leaving it in charge of Joseph, after dispersing the rest of our fellows, I at once started off to meet your honor. "

"Tis well—right well. And the booty?"

"Is here Captain." And the assassin, whose hands still reeked in human blood, placed several caskets and a purse in the hands of his superior, who by a silent motion, signified his desire to proceed. They mounted their horses, and in a few moments more, this worthy pair were again on the high road, which leads from Bruges to Blankenberg.

Their pace however, was not that of haste. By the lingering look which ever and anon the Captain cast behind him—it was evident he still expected the arrival of another

person—In this way hey proceeded slowly onward. Presently an approaching traveller was heard. A signal passed. The Chief, at once, despatched his companion forward to reconnoitre. His Lieutenant hastily galloped up to him, and they proceeded, at a quicker rate, towards the fishing village, where the body of the murdered man now lay.

After a short pause, the newly arrived stranger spoke.

“ You know, Captain, it is not my way to ask questions. You are aware I do your bidding, and seldom seek to know your reasons; but, on the present occasion, I confess I am anxious to learn your motives for this double work; especially as the Ghient affair can bring us no profit, and from the rank of the victim, we may yet, get into trouble. ”

His chief laughed. “ My excellent friend, you are indeed near sighted; though as you say, it is true I shall not gain much by

the death of the Marquis. But what of that? The double stroke will paralyze and divide opinion. With respect to discovery, cannot you already see, who will be pitched upon to pursue the assassins? Ha, ha, ha! you are indeed dull. Why *me* to be sure; and *you* shall be my proxy; solicited and appointed by the blind burghers of yonder proud city " and again he laughed.

" Captain you are right. Your genius certainly is ever ready witted. But still, in the present case. "—

His chief interrupted him; " I understand you; you cannot probe my motives for leaving my home, at such an hour, and risking discovery as it were, for no earthly purpose. Are not such your thoughts? "

" Most truly devined. "

" Well then, I'll explain. In the hamlet, which we are now approaching, dwells one, who is dear to me, beyond expression; one, to possess whom; I would give up rank, title,

honour, riches. You seem astonished; but 'tis no less true. The orphan daughter of a poor fisherman, the adopted child of a wretched Smuggler, holds this heart in chains, a heart which never yet could stoop to woo. In her presence, the object of a thousand courtly smiles feels as a slave. Yes—I have grovelled at her feet, and prayed but for *one* look of kindness, “*one* word of soft affection, and have been spurned!” And the Bandit ground his teeth, with rage, almost, ungovernable.

“ Knows she then your vocation ? ”

“ No, no ! ” thundered the superior. “ No; she knows me not, in either of my characters. She knows me only as the supposed son of a wealthy tradesman; a travelling painter; one willing to wed her. But there was a more favored gallant in the case, a miserable boatman! An almest boy, who lived upon the scanty means his net provided. This son of toil she loved, and for his sake rejected me! *me*, who never bore refusal! To-morrow she

has sworn to wed the stripling. Can you not guess my purpose then? ”

“ Doubtless to take his life. But why this fuss about a mere peasant? any of our men had done the deed without this trouble. ”

“ Think you that, *that*, would content me now? No—she has *scorned* me, and my love is turned to *hate*. He shall not die a *common* death. Each pain he suffers, she shall doubly feel. And know that *I*,—*I*, her despised suitor, wrought his doom! ” And he raised himself with passion in his stirrups.

At this moment they had arrived within view of the ruin, said to be haunted, which is situated about two hundred paces from Blankenberg. The Captain called his Lieutenant to his side, whispered some short directions to him, and as the subaltern galloped back to Bruges, or its vicinity, the chief of the Black Band entered the untenanted wreck of former grandeur.—



## CHAPTER II.

For a moment, the Captain (or as we shall more frequently style him *Le Noir*)—groped his way in utter darkness, feeling with his hand, which grasped a naked poignard, the way leading into the interior. Arrived however, in an open chamber; aware that the signal could not be heard outside; he ventured to give a low whistle. In the next instant, a light flashed on him; a dark lantern

was turned, and he found himself within three paces of his two associates, who silently held guard over the corpse, which had, thus for certain reasons, been brought hither. A smile of meaning, a glance towards an object lying in the corner, over which a cloak was loosely thrown, a nod of approbation from the superior, and their tale was told. The Gang had done their leaders bidding and that leader willingly accorded them his thanks; and yet no word was spoken—It seemed as if they feared the sound of their own voices would awake their victim, or their echo's betray them to the hand of justice.

At length Le Noir broke the silence, and in a subdued voice enquired. "How managed you the track?"

At once they understood and replied;

"Joseph turned his horse's shoes, and riding back (at some twenty paces from me) gave the appearance of a single horse having left this spot, arrived at the scene of strife, and again returned to it; his reversed shoes seeming to

approach Ostend, while mine appeared as coming from it.

“Tis well. Now mark my farther directions. I am about to leave you for half an hour; during that time walk one of your horses over to the stable door of the cottage, which stands on the northern strand; lead him right to it, and then destroy him; or get him back as you list; but on your life, let no print of returning hoof be seen, or we are lost. This I will leave to your ability to effect. While one does this, let the other dig a deep grave, to put the merchant in; but not till I return. I'll see the old-man sepultured myself; tis but respectful”; and the Bandit ehuckled at the joke.

While speaking, Le Noir had stripped off his cloak, and now appeared dressed as a smuggler. A bandage confined his brow, and the fresh blood seemed to trickle from under it. His clothes were rent in various places. A broken pistol was stuck in his girdle, and any one who now saw him, would have mistaken him for a contrabandist of the Flemish coast, escaped

within the hour from a severe encounter with the Revenue Police. So good was the disguise, that even his followers were staggered and surprised, as he thus shewed himself. After taking a glars of schiedam from theis well replenished horn, drinking, as was customary with the Band, " to the success of his present enterprise " Paule cautiously placed about him the various articles which had been rifled from the murdered man, and left the ruin, in a northerly direction.

At about hal an Engl sh mile from the village of Blankenberg, there stands a solitary cottage, now fallen into decay, but which at the time I speak of, presented an aspect of comfort and neatness far beyond the usual average found among the dwellings of fishermen. It had just been put in thorough repair, and neatly painted, to receive, with becoming respect, its future mistress.

The owner of this dwelling was a young, handsome villager, one who had never been

known to do an ungenerous, an unmanly action ; and though he owed his daily meal to the labour of his hands ; though poverty might be said, with truth, to be his lot ; yet so loved, so respected was the youth, that the old and the young alike referred their disputes and doubts to the arbitration of Charles Van Ecke. The morrow had been fixed upon for his marriage with Charlotte Gaesbek, commonly styled the Flower of Blankenberg ! The enamoured, and delighted, fisherman now sat beside his fire, in luxurious solitude, conning over his future plans "dreaming of bliss to come."

While he was thus engaged, a feeble knock was heard, and the youth started up in astonishment, wondering what could thus bring a Being to his door after midnight. The evening was calm ; it could not therefore be a shipwrecked mariner. His poverty was known ; it could not be a robber. What then might it be ? a message perhaps from Charlotte. She might want him ; she might be ill. At once he sprang up. The castles in the air, so lately

built, vanished "like the baseless fabric of a vision" and with hurried agitation, he threw open the door.

"Save me! oh, save me!" uttered a voice of despair, as a young and well built sailor staggered into the room. "They are after me; another moment; and I'm lost!" and he sank, half fainting, evidently overcome by the loss of blood, which still flowed from his temple, into a chair near the fisherman's hearth.

Charles, in a moment read the truth. The man who lay before him, evidently was a smuggler; one who carried on an illicit trade with the neighbouring Dutch ports. He had doubtless escaped from a severe rencontre with the coast guard and thus received his wound. A low groan from the sufferer, recalled Van Eeke to a sense of activity. He bolted fast the door, to prevent surprise; and flying to a cupboard, poured out a glass of spirits, which he handed to the wounded man, who drank it eagerly.

At length the stranger seemed to revive; freed

from the idea of immediate capture, conscious that his pursuers must have taken a wrong course; his strength appeared to return and he began to talk freely. "We had a hard bout of it. We had but four to seven; yet we beat them off. But what of that? I should have died ere this had it not been for you. Say in a word, how can I repay you? will you join us? I faith it is a pleasant life."

"Not so;" replied Charles, "'twould never do. I'm poor,—but honest. Besides, I am to be married in the morning, and a Rover's life would ill suit a happy bridegroom."

"Indeed! well then, although you scorn my offer, still I'll prove my gratitude. Here is an order on a friend of mine for two hundred francs, Nay, refuse it not. I've plenty, and to spare; 'twill be a pretty offering to your spouse. One thing, however, I would advise; keep it about you, on your person; you understand. A smugglers cheque is sometimes dangerous to expose. So keep it to yourself. And now, my friend, I'll drink to "*the maiden!*" And he cast a look of



strange meaning on his entertainer, as he placed the goblet to his lips. Then rising he rejoined : " And now, good night ! I would only ask one favor more ; 'tis, to step as far as the sandhills and look around, to see I'm not pursued." Charles willingly acceded ; for he felt a relief in being thus freed from the presence of a dangerous character ; one whose acquaintance might lead him into trouble. So snatching up his cap, he hastened out.

In a moment, the seeming smuggler had started up, drawn from his pocket the booty of the murdered man ; of whom we spoke anon ; and hurrying to the cupboard and the bed, hid (as it were) the different articles. Drawing forth a jacket, which he found, he smeared the lining with a composition resembling blood ; then seizing a knife, which lay upon the table (marked with the initials of the fisherman) he carefully concealed it, then sitting down again, he quietly awaited the return of Charles, who in a few minutes more re-entered, and assured his guest, that the coast

was clear. The next instant, saw that guest depart, leaving Van Ecke to dream over and enjoy, the thoughts of joys to come.

The night was unusually dark, and the driving wind blew coldly over the low sandhills which skirt the sea, and bury at each moment the footsteps of the traveller deep in their yielding substance — For leagues around no hillock rose from the surface of the extensive flat—No beacon served to cheer, or guide the wanderer on his way.—But Le Noir well knew the tract he now pursued, and bid defiance to the superstitious fears which any one less hardy would have felt with such a conscience, and at such an hour.

About a quarter of an hour more, and the Captain re-entered the ruined Castle; to which his comrades had returned, having performed his bidding. The grave lay open, and its future occupant placed on its edge, awaited but the order of the Captain to be thrown in.

The chief hastily entered, and going straight up to the corpse, inflicted on it several wounds,

with the knife which he had abstracted from the fisherman's hut. Then spurning the body with his foot, it fell heavily into its narrow cell; and throwing in the knife, still wet with blood, he desired his followers instantly to fill up the trench; to be at Thourout, on the following Tuesday, and further commanding them to leave the place as speedily as possible when their job should be completed; the redoubted Captain jumped on his horse, and ere another hour, Le Noir was far from this scene of horror, and duplicity.

### CHAPTER III.

Those alone, who have been at Bruges, can picture the gaiety of a market day in that city. The "Groot markt" (or "Grande Place") covered with innumerable booths, placed in regular alleys, ingeniously built every Friday night, and as rapidly carried off on the Saturday evening; displaying the well polished brass utensils, which gaudily decorate each Belgian kitchen; handkerchiefs, and shawls

of dazzling colours, lace caps, old china, and wooden shoes; all lend their gay appearance to this animated scene; while hosts of females, decked in every hue (Grotesque, yet picturesque) make up the scene, which weekly displays itself, in the aforesaid "placē" The idle soldier, standing at his guard room door, waiting the carillon from above to announce his turn of duty. The healthy corn chandler, stooping o'er his sack, in anxious expectation of a customer; the lazy chapman, and the steady Burgher, may all be found, desirous equally to learn, and propagate, the news of this, their favorite, day.

No laughing faces were however visible on Saturday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of october 1797. No tale of scandal, or broad humour, lit a smile in their honest faces. The murder of the Marquis de Juillot, near the town of Ghent, had chased their laughing mood, and caused a panic, midst the busy throng.

Soon after, still more horrid news arrived. The idol of the crowd, the last remaining

link between the Burgher and the people, their much loved Echevin \* had been murdered. At least so all believed. His horse, and that of his servant, had arrived at the barrier (with that extraordinary instinct which leads them to know their home) riderless. Their saddles were smeared with blood; while the animal, which the worthy magistrate had bestrode, was wounded, most severely, seemingly by a ball.

All Bruges was paralyzed.

The Magistrates the while, held consultation together in the Hôtel-de-Ville. The missing Echevin had gone over the day before, to settle some pecuniary matters at Ostend. It was determined therefore, to dispatch a proper force in that direction, with full instructions to make diligent search. But, to whom could this commission be confided?—That was the question.

At this moment, Salembier entered. He was young, active and intelligent—who so fit for

\* A sort of sitting magistrate — Generally a retired tradesman, or merchant.

such an undertaking?—The choice unanimously fell on him. But he at once declined. Captain Villedieu who accompanied him, was next solicited; and after some hesitation, he undertook the task. Preliminaries settled, full powers to search given; in a few minutes, the Dragoon was trotting at the head of a dozen fine fellows, on the flat, serpentine, road, which leads to Ostend.

Perhaps, in Europe, there does not exist a more dull and monotonous route than the five leagues, which lie between these Towns. In the whole line the traveller finds but four hovels; while the extreme flat, which extends for several leagues on either side, offers no impediment to the blast, which on a winter's night howls dismally over this dreary path. No light to be seen; no object to break the view; no noise, save the dull clatter which the paved road returns. The traveller may well shrink from encountering this journey after daylight. But now that the sun shone, and each mind was wrought up to a state of eager excitement, the group at

present hurried on, unmindful of the dreary scene.

They had arrived within a league of Ostend , when the party simultaneously reined up. With sickening horror, they interchanged a glance of conviction; the dreadful truth was indeed revealed to them , at least as far as circumstantial evidence could prove it. The stones were dyed for several yards around with blood ; the earth , which skirted the road , bore testimony to a violent struggle , while a discharged pistol , and the well known cloak of the poor magistrate , lay upon the ground. It seemed as if no soul had passed the spot, where the recent assassination had evidently been committed.

The group , prepared as they all must have been, still felt with force, the sudden shock, on thus abruptly finding a confirmation of their worst of fears. They eagerly dismounted, and scrutinized the spot.

On searching closely, they discovered that, a ball had grazed one of the trees, which bordered the road ; while the banks of the canal were



broken , as if a second struggle on that spot had taken place ; and many were of opinion, that they had, here thrown in, the Merchant's corpse.

In the mean time however, others had traced a distinct track of blood, towards a neighbouring field. Crossing this field , they beheld the recent marks of a horse's hoofs, deeply indented in the soft soil ; and yet another line of footmarks in an opposite direction, some twenty paces from the others. From this, they judged that a horseman had come, in a northerly direction across the Country into the open road ; and again returned to the same point ; evidently bearing back some bleeding object . It was therefore unanimously determined to follow this clue , and the party, carefully, proceeded.

For more than three leagues , they traced the marks, almost without a break. At length they arrived near the village of Blankenberg, when the track at once diverged. The anxious pursuers still followed it. They led directly to the entrance of the ruined tower which , as I have before described , stands a short

distance on this side of the fishing hamlet. Lights were procured; four determined men selected to lead the van; their pistols ready-cocked, in case of a surprise; sentinels placed, to prevent their escape, should any of the banditti still lurk within; their horses tethered and the party at once entered. No soul appeared. The ruin was evidently deserted; and the party having gained the utmost limit of the vaults, were about to return, when Villedieu perceived, and pointed out, some newly turned mould. In a moment, they had examined it; discovered it to be a recently filled grave, and in another instant, they had torn away the earth, which shrouded from their sight, the murdered corpse of their loved Echevin!

Even to those who daily see death; to those who carelessly dissect the human frame; to those who tread the battle field, and with apathy behold the forsaken temple of the mind; even to those, I say, the body of a murdered man brings terror, and disgust. Thus then the present party shrunk with horror,

as they saw the bloody form revealed, of him with whom, they oft had fed, and laughed.

A bystander had discovered a knife, marked C. V. E. It fitted in the wounds, and was therefore carefully preserved, and the group were about to remove the victim ; when one of those, who had been stationed outside, ran in, and stated that another line of shoe prints had been discovered. Leaving therefore two men in charge, the remainder set out, again in quest of the murderer.

Their search however was not long. The marks ceased at the stable door, attached to a neat, but isolated, cottage, which stood on the sands to the north of the village. The place was empty, as also the habitation to which it belonged. For a few moments they consulted ; then bursting open the door, they rushed in. No soul, however, met their view ! The interior presented a scene of cleanly comfort. Every article was arranged with just precision, and though the owner, *now*, was absent, the presence of a

blazing fire bespoke the probability of his almost immediate return.

To wait for this however, the party seemed disinclined. Their thirst for vengeance was unslaked, and they instantly determined to search the premises, which they now learnt from a peasant, who had joined them, belonged to Charles Van Ecke; a name which corresponded, with the initials on the knife!

Their investigation was soon successful. In various parts of the room; beneath the bed; and in the drawers; they found the papers, the pocket book, the purse of the deceased. A jacket, stained with blood, and other damning proofs, sufficient to convince them that they now stood beneath the roof of the assassin.

Presently, they heard, the merry sounds of music approaching. They rushed out. It was Charles who approached, leading to her future home, the flower of Blankenberg, who had just plighted her faith at the altar, and now looked proudly happy as she leaned on the arm of him she loved so well.

The coming throng surprised her, nor could Van Ecke conceive what thus had led a party to his dwelling ; he had no time however to conjecture. In an instant more, he was seized ; accused of murder ; and while the lovely girl sank fainting in the arms of her bridesmaid , the wretched, and bewildered youth, was bound and carried off, ignorant of what crime he stood accused.

## CHAPTER IV.

Charles, thus suddenly apprehended, had been hurried before the judge, then holding the assize at Bruges. In vain, had he told his story of the wounded smuggler; and ascribed to him the presence of those articles, now produced in evidence against him. In vain, had he declared his innocence. Unfortunately on his person had been discovered the cheque for two hundred francs, given him by the wretch that he had

sheltered. It bore the signature of "*Le Noir*," the well known title of the Captain of the Black Gang, to which all believed the unhappy prisoner belonged. To betray them, he was offered pardon, and wealth, and honor. But to do this, the youth pleaded in truth, his total inability. He was not however believed; but looked upon as obdurate and wicked. And was therefore condemned at once to immediate execution, unpitied and abhorred.

In the mean time, the poor girl had been conveyed to the cottage, which she had left that morning with a happy heart, in a state of insensibility; from which she was doomed to wake, miserable for ever. For several days, she was confined to her bed, happily unconscious of the approaching fate of her lover; unaware of the speedy manner in which he had been brought to trial and conviction. After a few days, she was again able to leave her couch. Still weak, she rose and tottered down to her once cheerful little parlour. Scarcely able clearly to recal the past, like one awaking

from a horrid dream , floating as it were between a sense of real and imaginary horrors , the poor sufferer had crept from her bed and now sat , with tearful eye , watching the moonbeams as they glittered on the scarcely rippling sea ; which looked so bright, so tempting, that it almost seemed to invite the wretched girl for ever there to hide her sorrows and her tears.

How often , from that window , had she watched the dancing bark , which buoyantly brought back her lover to her arms ! How often had he leaned upon that humble sill, and spoke the words of true affection ! Here , on this very spot , had Charles solicited and won her hand and heart. Here , he had triumphed over all his rivals ( in number not a few ) amongst whom might be counted Le Noir, who under the guise of a strolling painter had sought to win the flower of Blankenberg ; had strove , in vain , to ruin her, who now sat weeping at her lonely casement.

Le Noir had ever been mysterious. He came



not when another soul was present. He came not openly to woo the lovely girl. His visits were by stealth ; to avoid , as he said , the knowledge of his friends, who anxiously desired to unite him with a wealthier dame. His person therefore was unknown to Charles.

Charlotte had forgotten , in her sorrow , that the young limner, as he called himself, existed. She had not seen him , since he fled with imprecations, on learning that his suit was scorned ; that Charles Van Ecke had won the promise of her valued hand. She therefore started up with strong emotion and surprise , when looking out , she saw him standing opposite her window. In another instant , he was beside her.

The moon's ray reflected strongly on his visage ; a fiendish triumph seemed to light his eye, and the poor girl's heart sank with fear, she knew not why, at thus finding herself in presence of the man she had rejected. At length he smiled ; that smile almost amounted to a sneer as thus he spoke.

"And so ; you mourn already o'er your lot ? I said it would be so ; and yet you spurned me. You thought me wrong , and talked of sharing joys , with him , who dies so soon——

She started up "Dies so soon ? say, what mean those words ?"

"Their meaning's plain. Charles Van Ecke has been found guilty ; and is to suffer."

"Nay, nay ; you mean not so ? It cannot be. I'll stake my soul upon his innocence. I'll swear, before high Heaven , he is guiltless ; though I scarcely know of what he stands accused."

"Of murder ! a trifling crime, no doubt ?" And Le Noir smiled as a demon.

"Murder !" And she covered her face and sobbed hysterically.

"Most true , " coolly rejoined Le Noir ; "of foul assassination and robbery. He has not only been accused , but convicted , and condemned ; and this through *Thee* , — *Thee* , — whom he loved.

"Gracious Heavens !" cried the almost frantic girl , " speak, mysterious man , speak ; and

though my heart should burst, I'll listen while you explain the meaning of that speech ;" and she clasped her hands in mental agony.

"Be calm then, and hear thy doom, and his, who dared to cross me in my paths of love. Charles Van Ecke is *innocent* !—innocent as the new born babe.

"Oh thank thee—thank thee indeed, for this," cried Charlotte, throwing herself on her knees and kissing his hand. "Bless thee—you will see that he's acquitted."

"Not so;" sternly replied Le Noir, shaking her off. "Not so; twas I that compassed this;" twas I that planned it; and will see it executed. Yes, in me behold the real murderer! Nay, shrink not. Tis not the first that I've committed. I, whom you dared to scorn, for him; I, who as a miserable painter deigned to woo you; I, it was who worked your minion's doom. I (and his voice was raised to its highest pitch.) *I—Paul Le Noir! the Captain of the Black Gang!*"

The poor girl heard no more. With one har-

rowing shriek, she fell insensible on the ground, dashing her marble brow against the stone floor of her humble cottage. The blood flowed from it ; but the hardened Brigand waited not to raise, or soothe her. As he concluded the last words, he had dashed from the cottage, turned the key of the outer door, and fled, in wicked triumph from the victim he had made.

## CHAPTER V.

It was a bright and sunny morning. The Heavens ; the earth ; the sea ; all united in calm serenity. No rude breeze , no curled wave , broke the heavenly scene of peace. Nature indeed smiled , and all her children felt her power. Along the beach , a line of fishers boats had put to sea , and taken their various courses. Already they seemed as specks to the uninitiated eye. Not so to those who still lingered

on the strand. Each wife, each daughter there, could tell the bark which bore her parent, husband or her lover. The clock struck seven, and warned them to return and bear their share of daily labour. They therefore once more turned to the hamlet. There to pursue their various occupations of knitting, lace making or fancy basket work, as the case might be.

To reach the village, they had to pass the cottage of the orphan; arrived here they one and all determined to visit and condole with her, who thus seemed wedded to a dreadful destiny. It is true, they were not yet aware that Charles Van Ecke was actually condemned; for news flies slowly towards the peasants hut; they knew not yet, how full of misery was the poor girl's cup. But still they were convinced there was sufficient to warrant, and call forth their warmest sympathies towards one, whose kindness and goodness had won the hearts of all, and by her gentleness robbed even envy of her sting.

They knocked. No answer was returned.

Again ; still all was silent. — Could she be sick ? could she have fled ? For a moment, the crowd hesitated. Again they strove to make the inmate hear. Then fully conscious that some evil must have befallen Charlotte, they, by a simultaneous movement, forced open the easy yielding door, which gave to their view a sight indeed of horror.

Upon the floor, in death-like trance, surrounded by an almost pool of blood, lay the bereaved girl. The wound on her temple had happily bled freely ; and this, in all probability, had saved her life. Her light tresses were matted with coagulated blood ; her face as pale as marble ; her stupor and her cold, cold, hand, at first were taken for the evidences of death ; and a groan of sincere commiseration went round the assembled group. Presently, one more skilful than the rest had discovered that her pulse still beat, though slowly ; and raising her up, in a few instants more, restoratives of every kind were anxiously afforded to the wretched sufferer.

For a short space of time, doubt hung on every countenance ; while some there were , who even turned away and wept ; conceiving the recovery of the poor girl to be impossible. At length , she opened her eyes. No sooner did they catch the light , than they became most suddenly and alarmingly dilated : they moved from side to side as if they sought some dreadful object , as if the alarmed mind refused at once to tell the tale of dreadful recollection ; in another moment , however , the unhappy creature burst from the arms of those who supported her. Her senses seemed at once to snatch from memory the extent of misery which hung over her ; and ere the group could strive to soothe her , the once happy pride of Blankenberg had rushed past them , and in maddening haste , sought the road which leads to Bruges.

Those who loved her best , were first inclined to follow her , and bring her back ; and yet again , why should they act thus ? unacquainted with the motives which had induced her sudden flight , what harm might they not do in



thus restraining her ? So they considered ; and therefore with a sigh of sincere sympathy they sought their cottages, as Charlotte fled impelled by every pang of hope and fear towards the spot, where Charles remained a prisoner.

Twice on the road the poor girl fainted , weak from the loss of blood, the excitement of her feelings alone gave her strength to support herself through this journey of nearly three leagues. No friendly hand was near to succour her ; no hospitable roof to shelter her ; but nature came to her relief and brought her tottering limbs in safety to the goal she sought.

Although, in hurrying o'er the road , her mind preoccupied had not caught a single feature of the scene ; yet now, within the city walls, she bent her looks with eager gaze on every passing object. As quickly she hastened up the "rue d'Os-tende," which leads from the barrier to the heart of the town, she could not help fancying that a Fair had drawn together the many well

dressed peasants, who flocked towards the "Grande Place." The countryman in his blue smock frock, his wife in petticoat of many colors, with small straw hat, under which might be seen her ample cap and even sometimes diamond earrings (heirlooms amongst the Belgian peasantry for centuries). The Brugeoise woman, known by her cloak of darkest colour, enveloping her head within its capacious hood; the portly Soldier and the still more portly Priest; all mingled in the human flood which seemed to pour towards "the Groot markt."

Charlotte hurried on. She noted not the looks of calm surprise, which her appearance caused. She paused not to enquire the event which thus drew early crowds. Her eye was fixed on the tall tower of the belfrey; which rising over the whole neighbourhood, served as a beacon to guide her steps towards the prison where her lover lay. At least so she had heard from those who knew the town, and had described to her its different sites. At all events, she was

aware, that this point gained, she easily might learn her farther way.

At length, the "Grande Place" opened on her view, not solitary and deserted as usual, but filled with eager groups. For a moment, she marked not what it was that claimed their stern attention. She had entered by the western corner, and the angle of a projecting building for a moment shut out the object, which thus gathered to the spot all ranks in Bruges. The pointed finger, the fixed gaze, at length, made her turn her head back, and she perceived with horror in front of the "Panier d'Or" the dreaded guillotine.

Fascinated as the serpent's victim, horrified at its appearance, yet drawn by an attraction to it, the poor girl approached the spot. In the next instant, the busy murmur was hushed; each breath was held as the prisoner appeared. A single second only was he allowed to pause; but that pause gave time to Charlotte to recognize his person, and to read the dreadful truth. Ere, however, she could utter his name, the

public axe had drank the blood of Charles Van Ecke.

She strove to scream ; her voice refused its office ; reason tottered for a moment on her seat ; the struggle was not long ; she fell from her throne, and left the "flower of Blankenberg" in happy doubt of her misfortunes ; in happy ignorance of her real misery, for ever hence to roam, a wretched maniac.

## CHAPTER VI.

We will now return to the spot, where first our tale opens. The gay apartments of the Count Salembier were again crowded. A masked ball had drawn all the aristocracy far and near to his hospitable roof, in the "Rue, d'Espagne." The Marquis, whose supposed death had so abruptly checked the gaiety of his late entertainment, had by an almost miracle reco-

vered. His wounds, though numerous, were slight; and the Count now gave a fete in honor at once of his fair betrothed and the happy escape of her much loved father.

On this night, he shone with more than usual brilliancy. He moved about with easy grace. His wit flew here and there, and happy felt the dame, with whom he spoke. Villedieu also exerted himself to please. He danced, he played, he chatted, and in every way assisted his kind host to entertain the company, who willingly shared his gaieties, and dedicated, with a fervent heart, this night to Momus and Terpsichore.

From his scene of happiness and revelry; from his abode of mirth and gaiety; let us again revert to the poor girl, on this, the second day of her bereavement and her widowhood. Desolate, forlorn, but happily unconscious of the full extent of all her woes, the unfortunate girl had wandered through the streets of Bruges; hoping, as she believed, to meet her lover. Some friend had met her, and accosted

her. From him she had fled, and ran with rapid pace along the "Quai Ste Anne." Here, her uncouth and strange appearance, her wildly rolling eye; and maniac laugh, had attracted a crowd of idle boys, who in the very mischief of their hearts, that ruling passion to tyrannise inherent with our birth, had pelted her, reviled, and even struck her. For succour the poor creature had fled into the church of the Holy Sepulchre; passed quickly through the body of the curious edifice, and hid herself within the cell, built in the exact form of the grave of him, who died to save the world. Here, the unhappy lunatic crouched down and strove to repress the wild and painful throbings of her beating heart. Here, in this mimic tomb did the wretched Charlotte creep from insult and from blows. Here did the once most lovely girl of Flanders pass the night; her head unpillowed, and her eye unclosed.

In the morning, the woman (whose duty is to feed the ever burning lamp which lights this

shrine) started back with horror on beholding, as she thought, some guilty spirit. In fear, she fled and spread the news. In a few minutes a crowd were collected. The unhappy girl was discovered, and with shouts of execration and mockery she was again driven forth to wander and to droop.

Till sunset did Charlotte thread the streets, fondly expecting to behold her Charles. At length, quite wearied and worn out, she crept within the shade of a Porte Cochere, in the "rue d'Espagne," and for the first time, since her bereavement, slept.

The hour of ten had struck, when she awoke. The sound of music struck her ear. She looked up; the opposite house was brilliantly illuminated. The merry voices of those within, their joyous laugh, went painfully to the heart of the orphan. Presently, a tone was wafted on the breeze, and her whole soul hung on the sound. Each note she eagerly drank in, and a change came o'er her spirit, as she listened.

It was the voice of Salembier who had been



solicited to sing, and ever ready to oblige, now trolled forth the following stanzas :

We ride through the forest, we chase the wild deer,  
We smilingly sail o'er the sea.  
There is health in the blast—There is love without fear  
In the heart of the Bold and the Free!

The Coward may swerve, from each danger he meets,  
And fearing each trifle, may flee.  
But death and dismay are unknown in the feats  
Which lighten the hearts of the Free!

There is love in our hearts. There is strength in our arm  
We merrily revel, with glee  
Our welcome is joyous - our welcome is warm,  
To those like ourselves who are Free!

As he concluded, a sudden noise was heard.  
An attempt to intercept an intruder had failed,  
and in the next minute, Charlotte had rushed  
in, and in a paroxysm of despair, pointing to  
Salembier she cried, "*Tis he!—Yes, — tis  
Paul Le Noir! the Captain of the Black Band!*"

And she fell fainting with exhaustion on the floor. Reason had once more gleamed upon her, and in a dying state Charlotte was sane, though strangely excited and amazed at this bewildering scene.

The busy dancers crowded round. To them the sight was fraught with terror. The maniac now seemed about to close her eyes for ever. Her strange denunciation of their fascinating host was, evidently, the effect of lunacy; and they turned from the poor girl towards the gay Count, expecting to read in his looks a full and clear denial of the charge. But he had fallen for a moment in his chair, and now covered his face with his hands, doubtless struck with horror at this strange accuser, and her still more strange accusation.

In a moment more, he had started up, and stamping with his foot, called out imperatively for the removal of the "wretch."—

Some philanthropic bystander suggested to him, that the object of his anger was bereft of sense and consequently her words should pass

unheeded ; and besought the Count to allow her to be borne to some bed in the house, where she might die in peace.

“ Not so, not so ! ” furiously exclaimed Salembier ; while the company stood in silent astonishment at thus seeing their usually mild entertainer, assume the fury of a demon. “ Not so ! throw her hence , into the street, to die,—to rot,—to serve as carrion for the dogs.—Nay do you hesitate ? Thus then myself, I’ll treat the base accuser.” And he rushed towards her and would have struck her, had he not been restrained.

One of the company advanced , and endeavoured to soothe the irritated noble. “ Why therefore thus angered ? Surely the ravings of a poor lunatic should be disregarded. We know you well, and only pity the poor creature who is dying yonder.”

“ By Heaven ! she has spoken falsely ! ” vehemently cried Salembier, while they all smiled , to see him thus moved , by a charge apparently so preposterous. “ By Heaven !—she lies, ”

Charlotte with difficulty raised herself and slowly uttered. "May he who reigns above confound thee ! thou merciless destroyer !"

The Count could bear no more ; he rushed towards the door intending to call his servants to remove her. At this moment, it was thrown widely open and he started back on seeing it filled with soldiers. An officer advanced, and at once arrested him. Instantly recovering himself, Salembier smiled: "What means this mummer? the girl is mad ; you surely cannot mind her words ?"

"I understand you not," replied the officer, "my duty is to seize you, and place you in irons, and your associate yonder," pointing to Villedieu. "The servant of the Marquis de Juillot has recognized and identified one of the robbers, who attacked his master ; who, in his turn, has confessed that you, under the assumed appellation of "Paul Le Noir," are the Captain of the Black Gang ; and he, who stands beside you, your Lieutenant." "The witness is here ;" and he dragged forward a pinioned wretch, whom

Salembier instantly recognized as Jacques, his well tried follower and sergeant.

The blow was struck. No hope of escape now presented itself. His late friends had shrunk with horror from him. In a glance, the Bandit read his fate, and determined to make his end a bold one ; he burst into a loud triumphant laugh, and hoarsely cried, “ *Tis true—I am Le Noir — Le Noir, the terror of you all!—who dies by his own hand!* ” And he drew a pistol from his breast, and aimed it at his head. With the quickness of lightning, however, the officer threw aside the muzzle, and the ball lodged in the cieling.

The dying girl had clasped her hands. Speechless, she heard Salembier’s confession ; and her look of triumph seemed in gratitude to Heaven for having thus delivered up to justice the assassin of her every hope. She strove to speak ; she strove to rise ; but the exertion proved too much, and the once blooming flower of Blankenberg dropped dead in the arms of those who supported her ; as the Captain and

Lieutenant of this Band of murderers, heavily ironed, were conveyed to prison.

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Salembier was tried, convicted, and sentenced to die. He still, however, clung to life. The dreariness of a prison, the isolation of a dungeon, made him at length feel the horrors of a guilty conscience; and he offered to give up his band to justice, on condition of a pardon. This was partly assured to him; and on his evidence ninety six persons were condemned. Twenty to die; the others to perpetual labour. When, however, he revealed his different atrocities, when he told them, how he had danced as the Count Salembier, at many a ball with a girl who in the following hour he had cruelly and savagely murdered. When he boasted of the number of his victims, and the tortures he had put them to; his frequent assassinations from mere wantonness; the horrors he had committed; the judge refused to ratify his pardon, considering it unnecessary to hold terms with one so vile, so utterly

impossible to let loose upon the public. He therefore, was condemned to be guillotined with twenty of his comrades, on the same spot, where the innocent Charles had lately suffered. The only grace accorded him was to die the first.

It is said of this execution that it was one of the most terrific ever seen. Many a female, whom he had seduced looked on. The very officer of the guard had often dined at his table, and all present, more or less, were acquainted with him. He stepped out with a tolerably bold air; amidst the execrations, not only of the crowd, but of his former associates, whom he had betrayed. The axe fell twice ere his head was separated from his body. Twenty of his gang then followed. This scene of blood occupied nearly three quarters of an hour, the guillotine being much out of order. The most horrid part of it was, that one of the wretches having nearly escaped by hiding beneath some straw, the executioner, not certain of the fact, actually rolled from out of the sack the twenty heads,

upon the platform, and coolly counted them, to ascertain the fact. The sight was paralyzing, horrible beyond description. In the mean time, the cart with the hidden murderer had rolled away. A boy however, standing near, perceived as he supposed a boot beneath the forage it contained; attempting to draw it forth he found the culprit, gave the alarm, the horse was turned back, and the unfortunate man, so nearly free, was instantly decapitated\*.

I have thus minutely marked this case, as I cannot consider that the presiding judge was justified, in breaking his faith, even with a wretch like Salembier, whose name is still a by-word of terror in the low countries.

\* The skull of Villedieu is still preserved by Doctor B., an eminent physician in Bruges.





## THE BRAND.

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Ghent.

. . . . .  
I have just been engaged in a curious investigation; the parties, moving in the best society, have naturally attached to the cause a degree of importance, which would not perhaps be otherwise so interesting as to make it the theme of every tongue, which is now the case. The story is so dramatic that I have noted it down; intending to offer it, as a good ground work for a Melodrama, to my Nephew Louis, should his mania for play-writing be as strong upon him as when we last met after his triumph at the Ambigu.

I have of course, as in every other case substituted imaginary names; though I fear it is of little use to do so, since the affair has made so great a noise in this country.



# THE BRAND.

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## CHAPTER I.

That deservedly admired and popular Spa Chaud-fontaine , a spot more gifted by nature than any other in Belgium, was all gaiety ; the unusual circumstance of a marriage having there taken place to the great amusement and satisfaction of the visitors and neighbours, and the real joy of the parties concerned, filled the persons congregated there with ecstasy.

Edward de Pietrequin, a subaltern in the French Lancers, had left his division of the army in Spain; having received a severe wound at the battle of Salamanca, which compelled him for a time, by the advice of his medical attendants, to seek the reviving air of his native hills, situated in the vicinity of Liege. Arrived here, he quickly recovered, and had already made up his mind to leave the neighbourhood of Chaud-fontaine, when he accidentally met Mademoiselle Hallière, a Swiss by birth, who was here enjoying, at once the pleasures of society, and the advantages derivable from the admirable waters of the place.

To those who have much frequented watering places, it will be unnecessary to dilate upon the ease with which mere acquaintanceships grow into intimacies. Thrown continually into each other's company, freed from the restraints of metropolitan frigidity, admiring together beautiful scenery, the best feelings of our nature expanding with the clear blue sky above us, can we wonder at the circumstance, or blame

the graceful Edward for falling violently, passionately in love with the fascinating Marie Halliere.

To account for, to reason on it, is unnecessary; suffice it to say, the young Lancer fell desperately enamoured of the lovely girl, and in less than three weeks found his suit not only approved, but his hand accepted.

Mademoiselle de Halliere had none to consult; no kind affectionate father, uncle, or guardian to thwart her wishes; an orphan for many years, living on a limited, but independant, patrimony, derived as she asserted, from a small estate left to her by her father, she did not hesitate to pronounce a full affirmative to the warm solicitation of our hero ( for Edward was a hero ) to become his bride.

During their courtship ( if the pointed and lover like attentions of a youth to a young lady during fifteen days may be so called ) there were not wanting those who strove to mar the match. A prudent dowager, a Marchioness without a single sous, her only riches being six ugly daugh-

ters, had whispered to the Lancer her advice, to find out first, "who and what the damsel was, before he farther compromised himself."

Another female, I believe a rival belle, ingeniously hinted "that Mademoiselle Halliere always wore *high gowns* to hide the marks of a certain royal disorder, to cure which she had doubtless sought the Spa." Another, a rejected suitor, "swore that she was a widow and that her name was assumed." But Edward laughed at these remarks, and only loved her better for the envy she had excited. It is true he sometimes wished that she would speak of her past life in less ambiguous terms, and as frequently determined to question her on it. But when they met, that thought was forgotten. Truth and innocence beamed in her face, and the young soldier felt it would be blasphemy to doubt her.

Need I tell the result? the morning on which this sketch opens, beheld Marie the bride, the beauteous bride of the proud Edward; who after giving a magnificent breakfast to a large

party of happy friends, started off in high spirits for the chateau of his old uncle, situated near Furnes, determined to linger on the road some half a dozen days, and thus enjoy, in loving selfishness, the uninterrupted company of her, whose very life he felt himself to be.



## CHAPTER II.

At twelve o'clock on the fifth day, the young married couple arrived at Ghent, urged by their good old relative to hasten to him. They put up at the "Hôtel des Pays-Bas;" determined, after dinner to make the best of their way to Bruges, which would enable them to reach Furnes the following day. To save trouble they for the first time determined on dining at the

table d'hôte, which here (as throughout Flanders) takes place at one o'clock. By the time, therefore, that the Lady had taken off her shawl and bonnet, and performed those little "*agrémens de toilette*," incidental to an appearance before strangers; the great bell had sounded; and as Edward handed down his lovely bride, the already loud clattering of forks and spoons bespoke the fact that the substantial meal was already begun.

On entering the room, they found about forty persons seated, all greedily employed in devouring their soup, scarcely deigning to look towards the strangers who entered. In France, under similar circumstances, a dozen gentlemen would have risen to offer their seats to the lady. In Belgium it is different and more particularly in the trading town of Ghent. Each honest burgher eats his meal, scrambling both for the best seat and daintiest dish, without the slightest attention either to rank or sex.

It was an unfortunate circumstance for the loving pair to be divided thus early in their honey-

moon; but so, on the present occasion, they were compelled to be. Two chairs alone stood unoccupied, and these chairs far apart, while if possible to make the separation more severe, they happened to be on the same side of the table; so that not even an interchange of glances could take place, no word of converse pass, save and except for the benefit of a dozen stupid intervening citizens, a benefit which neither party were anxious to confer upon them.

As strangers, therefore, they sat down to table consoling themselves with the confident assurance that their separation could not endure above an hour, and that, *then*, a thousand extra caresses might make up for their lost portion of "Love's sweet interchange." Poor Edward, however, was far too much enamoured to sit down philosophically and enjoy his meal with appetite. His eyes roved about him, till they fixed in some astonishment on his opposite neighbour, who having coolly laid down his knife and fork, sat anxiously gazing at Marie. At first Edward thought it might be accident ;

some casual resemblance perhaps had struck him ; staring might be his habit, and the next minute his regard might fall upon another . But no . His eyes remained rivetted on “ la belle Marie , ” and the bridegroom felt anything but comfortable .

Every man is jealous . I do not believe any one who says he is not so ; nor will I assert that some qualms of this kind did not now arise in the breast of the Lancer, who could not help supposing, from the continued gaze of his opposite neighbour, that he must have known the newly married Lady ; by possibility might have been a former friend, a flirt, a lover . The idea was provoking, annoying, distracting ! Edward determined at once to put an end to his doubts ; so bending across the table after some preliminary observation to his staring neighbour, he observed with as much nonchalance as he could possibly muster : “ You appear to know that Lady ? ”

“ *I think,* ” replied the other in a grave tone , “ nay I am *sure* I do , ” then turned the subject .

This was anything but satisfactory to the young soldier, for again the eyes of the stranger were fixed upon Madame de Pietrequin.

There is nothing more provoking than a limited answer to a question, by which we have previously determined to elicit a full explanation. There is nothing so painful as half grounded suspicion, Edward found it intolerable; so again he pressed his enquiries.

“Are you quite certain that you have seen this lady before?” “As confident as that I now breathe. I never forget a face I have once beheld. It is *her* I’m sure; I cannot be mistaken.”

“That’s odd! where did you know her?” And the questioner felt that his happiness depended on the answer.

“Thank God! I never knew her,” quickly replied the stranger with a shudder.

This was indeed a curious answer. The husband scarcely knew whether to feel pleased or displeased at it. It is true it freed him at once from all jealousy; but, then again, it implied a mystery, apparently a dreadful one. What

could it mean ? He determined to hazard one more query.

“ My question seems to call up some unpleasant recollection. Will you explain it ?

“ If you wish it particularly I will; although I confess I would rather drop the subject; but not on any account while she is present.” With this reply poor Edward was forced to remain content; though he felt the rack itself would bring less torture than the agonies of suspense. Presently to his great relief, the well satisfied party began to break up. One by one the plethoric burghers left the room; but still Marie stirred not. Edward watched his opportunity to give her, unseen by others, a signal to quit. This she did, and in less than a quarter of an hour more, the Lancer and the Citizen alone remained.

“ Now then, Sir,” said the former abruptly turning round, “ your promised explanation ? ”

The stranger paused ere he replied. “ I am perhaps wrong in thus satisfying the curiosity of one whom I never before saw, and more particu-

larly so, when I tell you that the anecdote I am about to relate, involves most deeply the character of the unhappy female who has just quitted the table."

The stroke of death would have been less agonizing than such an answer. Edward's brain seemed to burn like molten lead. He could scarcely repress his agitation, as he asked with an almost sardonic sneer: "You were perhaps that Lady's lover?"

"God forbid!" solemnly ejaculated the burgher, "my tale is not of love. But as you seem interested I will give it you in a few words. I had a dear, dear friend Victor Mareschal. From youth brought up together, our mutual confidence was unbounded. Unfortunately Victor found it necessary, for the arrangement of some mercantile affairs, to visit Geneva. Here, it appears, he met a merchant's daughter, Adelaide Moran. Her charming manners, her lovely appearance soon won the heart of the enthusiastic young man, and to me he wrote in all the triumph of an accepted lover."

"I cannot really see what this has to do with the Lady who was here just now," impatiently interrupted Edward.

"It has every thing to do with her. Listen, and you will agree with me. Victor by a mere accident, arising out of the jealousy of one of the Lady's former suitors, learnt that she whom he thought so innocent, so good, had long ere she had seen my friend, forfeited her reputation. There was madness in the thought, despair in future life, but honor demanded the sacrifice; and the broken hearted young man, in a letter addressed to her, whom he could not but still love, declared his knowledge of her guilt, and his resolution never again to see her. This letter written, he instantly started off to join his friends at Dijon. To this spot she followed him, and having vainly, for some weeks, supplicated, urged, and threatened him with a view of making him marry her, seemed suddenly to relinquish her purpose, and entreated but to be his friend. As such for several weeks, she visited him. His health gradually declined. In vain did she



try to cheer him. He hourly sank ; when feeling death fast stealing on him , he wrote to me. I started off soon after the receipt of his letter ; but it was alas ! too late. When I arrived my much loved friend had been consigned , for several days, to the silent tomb ; but not before a post-mortem examination had taken place. From this investigation it was ascertained that he had died of poison , a slow , subtle poison ! Suspicion immediately fell on Adelaide Moran , she was seized and interrogated ; but she would neither confess nor deny. Circumstances were scarcely sufficiently strong to justify a trial for murder. She was therefore brought before the Court for the minor offence, namely that of forging a will by which it would appear he left her all his property. On this charge she was tried and convicted. Mitigating facts, however, were urged to save her from the galleys, and she was only condemned to stand in the pillory and be branded on the right shoulder. This sentence was to be carried into effect the very morning of my arrival at Dijon. Impressed with horror I at-

tended near the scaffold. The lovely, but wicked woman was brought forth. Never can I forget that sorrowful countenance. Deeply imprinted on my memory, it can never be effaced. Judge then my surprise, when I beheld that very woman, that identical female, the person who destroyed my friend, this day seated in yonder chair ! ”

Edward started up. His eyes dilated with horror ; he approached the narrator , “ You are mistaken by an accidental likeness ; that Lady’s name is not Moran , nor Adelaide. Say you’re mistaken or the consequences may be dreadful. ”

“ By the high Heaven above, I speak the truth. But why this agitation ? ”

“ Stay, stay but five minutes and you shall learn the cause. ” And Edward de Pietrequin rushed from the room, leaving the worthy citizen to wonder at the interest he took in one certainly very beautiful, but most depraved.

### CHAPTER III.

The time mentioned by the anxious bridegroom had nearly elapsed, when the communicative citizen, whom we will call Duclos, was summoned to the apartment of the soldier. Unhesitatingly he obeyed the summons, and entered with cool indifference into the saloon, where he found the now almost convulsed youth, who pointed to a chair; then, advancing to the door instantly locked it, and placed the key in his

pocket. Such strange conduct naturally made Duclos look about him. On the table lay some objects covered by a handkerchief; a sheet of recently written paper, and other things of minor importance. A door opposite, led from the saloon apparently to an inner bed room; but this was closed. There was nothing therefore, save the strange manner of the occupant, to astonish or alarm the visitor.

For a moment Edward seemed to collect his coolness, then calmly spoke, at the same time lifting up the handkerchief and discovering beneath it a pair of richly mounted pistols.

"Sir, you have now entered on your death scene or mine. The person, of whom you spoke to-day, is my wife. If you have dared assert a falsehood to me, if you have coupled an innocent name with foul dishonor, by all the powers of Heaven! you die, and that without further shrift. If," and the young man's voice became almost dreadful to listen to, "if, I say, you have spoken the truth, I pledge you my salvation *you* are safe. Speak not, answer not. A moment more,

and herself decides the fact." Thus saying, de Pietrequin walked to the inner door, opened it, and led forth his Bride, who seemed not a little surprised at the abrupt manner of her husband.

"Madam, I desire you instantly to strip off all covering from your shoulders."

The poor girl, thus taken by surprise, perhaps conscious of her guilt, perhaps overcome by modest scruples, unwilling thus to unrobe before a stranger, astonished at the harshness of him who only a few hours before had sworn eternal love to her, hesitated, and attempted to remonstrate.

"Nay I insist; no words I say," almost roared Edward.

"I beseech you! what does this conduct mean? Nay on my knees."

"Do you shrink? thusthen I'll prove or falsify the damned suspicion." And the impassioned youth flew with tigerlike avidity and tore off her upper garments, till her shoulders were without covering.

One glance was sufficient. Plain and pal-

pable the horrid brand appeared confessed. The executioner's iron, had seared that marble flesh, and left the damning reminiscence of the harrowing crime.

Edward now required all his coolness. A smile almost played on his writhing features. He took out the key and threw it to the merchant.

“ Quick, begone! lest madness make me stop your tongue for ever. It were better perhaps to close your lips lest they again repeat this tale of shame and deep dishonor. But no—I have pledged myself to let you go unscathed, and though thus fallen I will not break my word. Quick, begone! unless you'd wish to see me do a deed of stern, but cruel, justice. ”

It needed no farther words to induce Duclos to leave the room. He hastily rushed down stairs to summon aid to stop the rash young man. He had reached the last step when he heard the report of a pistol. Ere he could call assistance a second weapon was discharged and a heavy fall shook the stair on which he stood.

At once he was surrounded by a group of

s.

anxious waiters, with the landlord at their head desirous to learn from him the meaning of these sounds. By signs alone he could reply. They therefore one and all rushed up, forced open the door, and there beheld indeed a sight of horror.

Pietrequin had first shot through the heart the once lovely being who had deceived him. Her warm blood still flowed from her breast and stained her white robe. Her flaxen locks were dabbled with the gore, and pity could not refuse a tear, however guilty the victim might have been.

Not so the destroyer; he had placed the pistol in his mouth and blown away the upper part of his head. Horror and disgust claimed the feelings of the beholder, as he looked upon the dreadfully disfigured remains of the stern executioner of her, he once, had loved so well.

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Such was the story of those whose real names

I have concealed. The poor man, who by an unguarded observation caused the dreadful catastrophe, has never held up his head since. What makes the story more distressing is, that circumstances have since come to light, which have proved Victor to have destroyed himself in consequence of remorse at having *unjustly* suspected Adelaide Moran, who consequently died innocent of all crime, after undergoing the most dreadful degradation ; her only fault having been a want of candour towards her husband ; a concealment towards one who should have shared her every thought. Such concealments, I have often remarked, have brought years of misery to those who have foolishly persisted in them.





## FELO DE SE.

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Dunkirk.

.....  
My friend Monsieur M\*\*\*\*, with whom I am now staying, related to me the following particulars of a curious trial which actually took place at Lille a few years ago, and assured me that the facts were by no means exaggerated. He was an advocate and was in Court during the whole trial. He in confidence gave me the real names of the parties. It is one of the few trials I have taken notice of, which have not come under my own immediate eye—But I think I can vouch for the truth of it as M\*\*\*\*, is a matter of fact man, and one who never embellishes.



# FELO DE SE.



## CHAPTER I.

“You may have remarked, at about two miles on this side of Dunkirk, just by the ruined windmill, a regular old French Chateau; wearing a somewhat dilapidated appearance. The closed windows; the unhinged gates; the once dusty avenue, now overgrown with grass; bespeak, but too truly, how long that spot has

been uninhabited ; and gives to the scene a cheerless appearance. I do not mean by this , to say that it, ever, could have been a comfortable abode ; the French have no idea of this ; their Chateaux are all built, upon one plan ; a large white square House, with lots of windows ; the kitchen often opening on the hall ; smokey chimnies ; broken locks , attached to doors , which cannot close ; loud rattling window sashes, which like Æolian harps, allow the wind , to sigh through various chasms ; add to this , steep wooden stairs ; dining rooms , with stone floors ; stoves without heat, and you have the interior of a noble residence ; while , as to the exterior, they never vary ; a long straight avenue , leading from the door to the road ( a distance seldom exceeding fifty yards ) the ground in front of the house planted , as a cabbage garden ; that , in the rear , as an orchard : occasionally, a square of forty feet, enclosed in high brick walls , some distance from the mansion , mis-styled a garden ( its only ornament , being a gaudy summer house ) and you have

equally, a graphic sketch, of the exterior charms, of nine, tenths, of the best châteaux, in France."

The house, which I described, as standing near Dunkirk, belonged some fifteen years ago, to Monsieur Victor Cæsar Moulles; whose great, great, grandmother, had been a Marchioness; whose own great uncle had been a General. Victor, however, had been bred to trade, brought up as a Soap-boiler: he had thriven well; and retired, at the age of fifty two, from all to do with commerce; had purchased this property, which he instantly baptised as the "Château de Moulles;" and bought a lot of old pictures wherewith to decorate his "salle à manger;" and from the difficult task, of trying to persuade others; he at length ended by fully convincing himself; that these, were sketches of his "long gone ancestry."

His first, and leading, foible, was a love of title; a shrinking horror at the name of "trade." He never spoke of business; he wished

to drop the past, and suddenly become a "country seigneur."

His second fault, was still more glaring than the first. A soul absorbing, vanity; a curious belief, that he, was in the flower of his age, at fifty six; for so, he was when this my tale began.

He argued, perhaps very rightly, that the world could not know better than himself, and *he* considered that, he still was young; the old Beau's hair, was grey; perhaps, like that of Marie Antoinette; a sudden grief, had turned it in a night. He sometimes, suffered from Lumbago; what of that? he saw the other day, by the papers, that a boy of fifteen had died of it, it was therefore, no sign of advanced years. His valet (a cunning Parisian) had told him; "that, he was, the best looking man in the Province, when he put on the uniform of the National Guard; and blacked his grey moustacheos" — why, therefore, doubt a fact, he loved to glory in?

In France (as in this country) it is customary, for Parents to make arrangements for the

suitable marriage of their children, without consulting the feelings, of the principal parties concerned. A "mariage d'inclination" being looked upon, as a most silly affair, altogether beneath the notice of the proud, or the prudent.

In the neighbourhood of Dunkirk, there resided at the opening of this tale, an old Count de Sansou, descended from one of the oldest families in France. This noble, lived in, almost Hermit-like, seclusion; compelled thereto, by (that most stern of masters) poverty; he was, it is true, nominally proprietor, of half a Province; but, its revenues were hypothéqu  , to that nice degree, when all allow

"The force of nature—can no farther go."

A single acre, would not give security for a single sous—indeed, so numerous were the creditors, the mortgagees; that it might almost be compared, to merry England, in her by-gone days, of whom, tis said

"There was a time, ere England's grief began "

"When every rood of land, maintained its man. "



Poor Monsieur de Sansou felt this — four Daughters!—*blooming Daughters!*—to support; and not, one shilling, to support them with.

Nature is, however, ever complaisant; and often reverses her more general rules, to serve an individual case. So the Count determined, as he could do *nothing*, for his children; his children, should do *all* for him. He had brought them up, in a school of strict, and blind obedience; that is to say, his straightened means, compelled him to have them educated, in a Convent; from which, they issued very quiet; somewhat bigoted—somewhat pure; very automatonlike! They, therefore, heard with pious resignation, their Father's announcement; that, to them, he looked, to prop his “falling house,” and sighed in chorus “yes” to all his propositions.

Matters stood thus within the walls of “Sansou” when my hero, took up his abode in their neighbourhood; need I relate, how soon his whims were told; his strange vulgarities repeated, and caricatured; for the diversion, of

the much amused young Ladies. Thus , much however I will say ; they had a far different effect on the Count, who in this new settler, beheld in mental view, a fitting husband for his dear Cordelie (his third daughter) whose misfortune it had been to catch the small pox, and received a stamp upon her once fair face, of that most horrible disorder ; which would for ever, place a bar between herself and marriage ; at least , so thought Mons de Sanson ; till he heard of Victor's arrival—Victor's love of tittle !—It then , for the first time, occurred to him ; that Cordelie might wed — that by a very fair exchange—the Tradesman's gold might buy the Noble's blood.

Under these circumstances, the Count's movements were at once decided. He called upon the Parvenu ; delighted, and astonished him by actual condescension ; ( a fact more flattering since the world , gave out, the Noble's pride , as something almost ultra ) then dazzling , the Soap-boiler ; with his coronets , and titled relations ; left the poor man, in pleasing doubt,

revolving in his own mind, whether he really stood on his head ? or on his heels ?

An invitation to dinner followed; the massive plate, (the only costly article, which could not be sold) displayed; the family pictures explained; high deeds of ancestry rehearsed; the party all agreeability. Sansou, however, had tact; he did not let Cordelie yet be seen; but pleaded illness as the cause, of her non-appearance, at the dinner table. Victor went home delighted, to his Valet.

The next day—aye, the *very* next day; Moulles went over to visit his *friend*; for vulgar people, like to be familiar with the great, and never stop at mere acquaintanceship. The Count, was in his study, and alone. How it was brought about, I never learnt; but this, I know to be a fact; Victor left that room; the *betrothed*—the *future Husband*, of a Lady, he had never seen; the lovely (as he hoped) Cordelie de Sansou! vicountess in her own right! having the power to confer a title on her Husband.

Tis only fair to say, by this arrangement, that my friend had lost, near half his fortune ; that, he had consented to wed, an unseen "Demoiselle." But what of that? she was *noble*! *He* soon would be the same. "I wish to God" thought the innocent Soap-boiler "my dear Father, the Grocer, was only here, to see me."

All was happiness : the arrangements I have just described had taken place in March ; it was now May, and Victor as my tale opens was rumbling in the diligence from Dunkirk to the little romantic village of L—where the Count's family were gone, to drink the waters ; and prepare for the expected marriage, which it was stipulated, was then, and there, to take place.



## CHAPTER II.

The clock struck ten, as Moulles rolled up to the door of the "Cour Impériale," the only inn, in the salubrious village of L —. The night was dark, and rainy, and the little cabaret, which under any other circumstances, Victor would have considered but a sorry resting place, was now looked upon, as a welcome — and a comfortable haven.

As the worthy Soap-boiler stepped out, he nearly fell; a friendly hand alone could have

saved him. He staggered; his head reeled; and he would have dropped upon the "Pavé" had he not been saved by some one near, who stepped forward and supported him. Confined for fourteen hours in a ponderous vehicle, with eleven other human beings, inhaling a mephitic atmosphere (for all pure air had been carefully excluded on account of a squalling brat but lately recovered from the hooping cough); squeezed, jolted, and parboiled, in this human steam condenser; it was not to be wondered at, that Cæsar felt thus giddy. But still he liked it not — his sugar selling Parent had died of a paralytic stroke — These reflections passed like lightning through the mind of my hero. He felt extremely sorry for himself, he also felt it necessary to thank the person who had so opportunely come to his aid; he raised his eyes to do so, and recognized the Count. What his emotions were on this occasion may easier be conceived than described. A Count — *a real* — *Noble Count* — to meet him — to receive him. What delicate attention? Seized by a sudden giddiness; that

Count had saved him, and upheld him. He had actually leant *familiarly* upon a *Noble's* arm — what an honour! Again Victor wished the old Grocer were present to behold his bantling's triumph. He was about to speak; the Count tapped him gently on the arm. "Do not say a word, my dear friend." Poor Victor could not have done so had he wished; his emotion at hearing himself thus called made him dumb. "You are agitated, and tired — go to your room therefore; but pray come to us early, as you know a pair of brighter eyes than mine, will anxiously watch for you" (and he smiled with meaning). *Jusque-là, adieu.* — Then turning to the Landlady: "Madame, to your hands I commit my excellent and most worthy friend Mons de Moulles. The aristocratic sound of the "*de*" rang pleasantly in the ears of the Tradesman. "Let every comfort be afforded him, and remember the best wine. No second rate, falsely called, first qualities. He is *a rare judge* and is used to nothing but superior living." — And the Nobleman hurried

away leaving the astonished and overcome Parvenu standing like king O'Toole and his goose ,

“ Wid his beautiful grate big mouth, wide open. ”

The cringing Landlady now ushered the traveller into a well lit “ *salle à manger*, ” in a moment more the supper, ordered for him by the Count, was laid on the table. Waiters fluttered round him, Chambermaids spoke in suppressed tones, in fact, for the first time in his life, Cæsar received the attentions, usually bestowed on a great man.

The meal over, Moulles desired to be shown to his room ; a host of people accompanied him there. He desired to be called on the arrival of his valet next morning ; a host of voices echoed “ *Oui , Monseigneur.* ” He ordered hot water, a dozen females ran to fetch it, indeed he felt proudly conscious that he had suddenly come to a knowledge of his own *proper* consequence. With this impression he made a bow, meant to be excessively dignified ; uttered a



condescending "Bonsoir," and then shut the door, as they supposed for the purpose of retiring to rest : but they were wrong as you will presently perceive.

In a somewhat dark looking alcove stood a white curtained bed—its snowy draperies looked anything but ghostlike—so Victor felt content ; the floor was beautifully waxed and polished, a luxury seldom met with in an ordinary sleeping room, which evidently betrayed that this apartment was occasionally made use of as a saloon. A long french window led to a small balcony some three feet above the level of a beautiful garden, which by the pale glare of a summer moon, now shone in all the cold blue tints in which poets are often pleased to deck the midnight rambles of a "loving pair." —Now though, as I believe, such a view might suit and even, chasten, the taste of a red hot admirer, it was by no means to the palate of the worthy Soap-boiler, who with an emphatic "Humph" (meant to announce that his local examination was complete) coolly closed the

curtains and began to rummage in his ample portmanteau. From this he carefully drew forth a razor and the other necessary apparatus for shaving ; a pair of tweezers ; and a small phial marked, "Inimitable Hair Dye, warranted to change grey hair, to a jet, and glossy black within three hours." The se having placed upon a table ; poured out the boiling water and drawn the large glass before him, de Moulles began to operate.

Imprimis, went the grey moustacheos. With them my hero threw off half a dozen years. The whiskers next were shaved, and every grey bristle straggling o'er the cheek carefully picked out. With them went half a dozen more. The hair was dyed, and Victor felt that twenty summers might be taken from his age, and he appear before his Lady-love next morn as bordering on *thirty three*. Tis true his locks were not yet black ; but well wrapped up in a Cambric handkerchief ( according to the printed directions ) my happy lover felt secure they would soon become so, and

proceeded thus prepared to seek his pillow.

Moules, in his youth had somewhere heard of a famous murder, committed by a wretch, who had concealed himself beneath the bed of his victim. He, therefore, always looked *under*, ere he lay upon his couch; taking the light in accordance with this rule he ventured to take his usual peep. Imagine his horror, imagine his surprise! a pair of dreadful eyes, fiercely glanced upon him! He could not move; he could not scream; his limbs, his tongue refused their office. Again, like the fascinated rabbit, he gazed upon the enemy. It *moved*! he would have shrieked. He did not however do so; for when it rose, he saw it was a *cat*!

His fears now turned to anger. In genuine french, he swore,—he raved—he gutterally “*Sacré*” poor grimalkin, and tried by every means to drive her forth from her warm shelter—Puss, however, knew her almost inaccessible position and maintained it. What could poor Victor do? He could not sleep with such a neighbour. Indeed, his nurse had told him of

a child who lost its life from having had its breath all sucked away by such an animal. He could not call for help, bandaged and plastered as he was. He had but one way left ; he stretched his arm beneath the bed and seized his long tailed foe. Grim, however, was not to be so handled unresistingly. She fixed her claws, first on the wristband of her antagonist's shirt and tore it much ; then, turning with redoubled fury on the hand itself, she clawed and bit it well. For several minutes, the combat lasted. At length, the Frenchman triumphed. He got her fast by the tail, and drawing her forth, threw open wide the window, gave her a passing kick to shew her he was master, and with a proud defiance crying, "*Je suis Français moi !!*" hurled her into the garden, and banged the casement to, with an air of exultation, stepping into bed, proud of the victory he had achieved.

Who shall account for dreams ? Philosophers may try to do so, and find foolish people to believe them. Theories may start up, and find a

host of staunch supporters. Calculations may be made, and all the subtleties of moral and physical reasoning be brought to bear ; and yet , bring no conclusive reasons for the strange wanderings of the mind, which ought (in common sympathy) to fall asleep with the body ; but which, as in the present case , often takes it into its head, to lead its possessor during the hours of rest ; straight from the dungeon to the throne ; invigorating—renovating—from age to youth—from happiness to misery—then, suddenly paralyzing or sitting with unearthly weight upon a nervous frame—dancing ; burying ; elevating ; or distroying : in fact ; giving us a peep at wordly events during somnolency which kind fortune , refuses to our waking hours.

Such vagaries did sleep play with the worthy Soapist Moulles. First he dreamt , he was about to be married. His bride was lovely as the fairest flower, and crowds applauded as the pair approached the priest ; who , bowing low, saluted Victor as the “ Count de Moulles. ” All was

happiness : triumph sat upon his brow — when, all of a sudden ; a little black devil jumped up , and pulled the poor bridegroom into a deep grave, where, coolly perching himself upon his chest, he sat grinning, while his victim deprived of all power, in vain essayed to call, in vain attempted to rid himself of his very unpleasant companion. Suffocation ensued ; he felt he was dying ; another moment and it would be too late. He looked up, and the imp showed his white teeth. He felt his life's blood burst from every pore. The pressure became still more galling. One struggle more — one death struggle — as he believed — and Victor awoke!

### CHAPTER III.

Starting up ; his vision seemed for a moment realized. A warm stream flowed down his face, and striving to enter at his mouth nearly choked the unhappy Victor. He touched it with his hand and by the pale uncertain daylight, which pierced with difficulty through the curtains, he found that stream was blood ! He tore off the handkerchief which bound his head and strove to staunch it. It poured, however, like

a torrent from his nose. The frightened traveller arose and vainly tried to find a bell : in doing this (whether from the cold which struck him as he stepped from his bed or not, I cannot say; but this I know,) his nose ceased bleeding. But not so the fears of the Soap-boiler. He felt one side of his head and face most suddenly contracted. He looked in the glass; his nose was drawn aside, his cheek was strangely furrowed, and his eye dragged down. Victor dropped with horror and despair the mirror which thus reflected him an altered man ! It shivered in a thousand pieces ! an omen to our hero's superstitious mind of " dreadful luck. "

What could it be ? Doubtless some artery, some vessel had given way, which caused at once the bleeding and the strange contraction of his face. Tis true, old Moulles *just* thought it *might* be paralytic; but he would not even *dare* to think it so, and banishing the idea as an unwelcome and unfounded intruder, he fondly hoped ere breakfast time, again to be " all right. "



A noise was heard, as if of approaching footsteps in the corridor. Some person, doubtless wakened and alarmed by the noise the broken glass had made. Moulles very sagely thought it were not well to be perceived in this his present woeful plight, which some ill natured person might report to "mademoiselle!" At all events, he'd not be seen at least till after he had tried once more to recover his good looks. So when the waiter quietly tapped at his door and enquired "what was the matter" he gruffly answered "nothing." His own voice seemed to startle him, it was changed; quite changed! Victor coughed twice; but still it altered not. The waiter seemed to share the worthy man's surprise; a not quite intelligible exclamation of wonder escaped from him as he turned and hastily quitted the door.

Our hero, half dead with fright, wounded by anxiety, suddenly bethought himself, that perhaps the open air might work a change? So throwing the blood stained napkin on the bed, drawing on a light-dress which he had purpo-

sely brought with him; opening the window and seeing the sun already shining, Victor Moulles jumped at once into the lovely garden; there to resolve in his own mind how the deuce this disagreeable "contretemps" had occurred. Whither it had proceeded from fatigue, anxiety of mind, or poison contained in the unlucky, hair dye?

In this mood, he threaded right and left the, would be, serpentine gravel walks of the small enclosure; thinking with pride, how probable that, step by step, he might in time become prime Minister of France. How fond he'd find his little wife! how courteous all would be to him! and lots of nonsense of a similar kind. These his soft dreamings were, however, soon disturbed by sounds of human voices.

"I see him," loudly cried one—"quick, after him," cried another—"We have him now," roared a third. The pseudo prime Minister was amazed. He looked in the direction of the speakers, or rather I should say the bawlers, and saw several persons at the window,

he had lately quitted ( the window of his bed room ) evidently seeking for some person ; doubtless himself ; since they pointed towards the spot where he stood rivetted with astonishment, until he saw them , one by one, jump down and run towards him. It now struck him, for the first time , that his extremely obliging Papa in law in embryo, had perhaps thus early sent over to shew his respect and anxiety, to pay attention to his future son. Nothing could be more evident. But then again , what impression could he make , thus lost , in dishabille ? “ First impressions often stamp future friendships,” wisely argued Victor. This would indeed deteriorate from the dignified manner he intended to pursue on seeing his wife’s proud relations . On no account would it do , to be thus caught. So in an instant, Moulles made up his mind, and leaping a narrow fossé, which bounded the garden, he set off , at a half running pace, across the fields adjoining.

His pursuers were not , however, thus to be

baffled. They jumped too. "How courteous"—thought the Soapboiler! "How polite! but still they shall not see me." And he increased his speed; so did they. Quicker went one party, quicker went the other; till a fair racing pace, at length thoroughly winded "the Parvenu" who was reluctantly compelled to pause for breath, sheltering himself, however, in the hope of escaping their observation behind a large tree.

Here my hero remained ensconced. In a few moments, his pursuers came up. He could now plainly hear them; but they could not see him. "How funny!" thought Moulles. "How beautiful! Iv'e escaped them, and their troublesome civilities."

"It was here, he seemed to vanish. Where can he have disappeared? tis very strange!" said one of the party. The hidden old man laughed in his sleeve, at their disappointment and determined to banter them hereafter about it.

"The *Scoundrel* must be somewhere near,"

rejoined a second. Moulles made up his mind to cut this rude man, who could speak thus even behind his back.

“Damn the *Villain* ! I’ll take him dead or alive !” gruffly sounded a third. Victor was actually petrified. He sighed with astonishment.

“Give me the blunderbuss,” again put in the first ; “I heard a breathing in yon bush ; I’ll fire into it.” And he seized the death dealing weapon.

“There’s not the slightest occasion to do so,” cried Moulles, eagerly stepping forth and assuming a forced laugh, supposing his embryo relations wished to be witty, “though really my friends I —”

What the conclusion of this sentence would have been, I really cannot take it upon myself to say ; for ere he could speak further, two ill looking dogs, some six feet high, by half that number in breadth, had seized by the collar and nearly throttled the astonished Soap-boiler.

“*You wretch !*” cried number one, of the “long elevens” between whom Moulles now

found himself, “ *you wretch!* ” and he gave him a jerk that nearly dislocated his neck.

“ *You blood thirsty villain!* ” echoed his ditto on the other side, grasping his collar, stock and all, until my poor friend actually turned blue.

“ Where is the body ? ”

“ Speak or I’ll make you, ” bellowed a third with the face of a true bully; and he accompanied the threat with a slight kick, by way of a sample, “ what have you done with him ? ”

“ Who? — who? ” faintly articulated the half choked prisoner.

“ The old Soap-boiler. ”

Moules had once or twice heard this appellation before, and actually suspected it applied to himself. The question therefore was doubly strange and his countenance bespoke the puzzling state of his mental reflections. The party perceived this.

“ Jean, bring the postillion’s whip here; we’ll make him speak, or damn him! we’ll flay him.”

Now poor Victor was fully aware that a postillion's whip, in France, is very little short of a knout in Russia. He, therefore, very demurely offered to give every information in his power, provided they would have the goodness just to tell him what they meant?

“Where is the body of the victim? where is the unfortunate creature Mons Moulles? — answer quickly!” And they gave their captive another shake.

Now it seems nobody could answer their question better than Victor. He too well knew where he was; but really their question seemed so odd, he paused for a moment ere he replied. At length he stammered out: “I’m here.”—

This answer, however, so beautifully simple in itself, did not appear to satisfy his tormentors; amongst whom he perceived at least two of the waiters, who had so obsequiously waited on him at dinner the night before, and whose rude conduct, now astonished him the more.

"We know you're here," said one of them, "we've got you here, and mean to keep you. But that has nothing to do with it; for the last time we ask you; where's the corpse?"

"Whose corpse?" whiningly interrogated Moulles.

"The corpse of Mons Moulles to be sure," replied the waiter.

This was a poser. That he should be actually running about after death was quite a new position to Victor, and though he heard it thus confidently asserted, the frightened Soap-boiler could not help *doubting* the fact. He looked at his hand; it was certainly the same he used yesterday; and appeared in full vigour. His feet were "alive and kicking" while his soul was "tremblingly alive" to his present situation; what could they mean?

Ere, however, he had time for reflection, he felt his legs suddenly jerked from under him, and in a moment more several hands were busily employed in rifling him. He now began to think, he understood the matter. He had



fallen into the hands of robbers; most likely murderers; since it was plain they would hardly let him escape, to betray their persons, knowing well that he must recognize them. They took his purse; his pocket book, opened it, and triumphantly exclaimed, "I thought we were right — there is a letter directed to his victim — Victor Cæsar Moulles."

"Yes, *to me*," groaned the pinioned wretch, "from my friend the Count."

"Who the devil are you?" savagely interrogated a policeman, who it appears had come up. Victor caught at the hope of his official aid and eagerly cried:

"I am Mons Moulles!!"

"The devil you are?" and they set up a shout of derision. "*The unfeeling wretch!*" cried one as the shout died away; "hardened sinner," chimed in another. "Hush," growled the policeman, "hush! dont stand talking here, but let us take him before Mons le Commissaire at once; and let him be dealt with according to law. Here drag him along." And the

Soap-boiler found himself dragged forward by a score of wretches towards the village of L—

“ Well, ” mentally ejaculated Victor, “ this is the strangest proceeding I ever met with ; to be taken before a magistrate , first for being *alive* , and then for having been robbed — I really dont understand it : ” and with this consolatory conclusion , the old man suffered himself to be hauled along.

## CHAPTER IV.

In no country (I believe) are magistrates the most early risers, whether their slumbers are more profound, the weight of many a grave decision super-inducing there unto, or not ; I really will not pretend to devine ; but, I have no hesitation in asserting, that very few of these functionaries are to be found out of their beds at six, A, M, the exact hour at which Victor Cæsar found himself, most reluctantly, ringing at the

“ Porte Cochère ” of the great man of the little town of L—

Mons le Commissaire was , however , still slumbering : the very servant girl , who opened the door , was half asleep ; the ugly dog which stood chained in the court yard had not yet commenced his daily barking ; in fact , the party seemed to arrive a vast deal too early ; but as the policeman seemed to consider the affair of no small importance , the prisoner was hurried into a cold-striking “ Salle à manger ” which the Justice sometimes used as a Hall of judgement , then and there , to await the coming of that awful personage.

Various were the strange faces thrust into the room to catch a glimpse of the supposed culprit ; many were the looks of horror directed towards the puzzled captive.

To avoid their gaze , Victor rose and rushed towards the recess formed by a half open window ; in an instant a dozen hands had seized him , a dozen tongues declared he had attempted to escape ; and ere another moment had elapsed

the poor Soap-boiler found himself in handcuffs. In vain he remonstrated ; in vain he assured them of their mistake ; the gentlest answer they returned was "*Wretch*," "*Villain*," and a thousand other such endearing epithets.

At length a happy thought flashed through the mind of Moulles ; a certainty of instant liberation : tis very true that it was galling to have recourse to such a measure, to let his friend behold him under such degrading appearances ; but nevertheless it was his only chance ; he therefore boldly asked his guards ; to send for the Count de Sansou.

"He has already been informed of all the circumstances," gruffly replied the Gendarme.

"Thank heaven !" uttered Victor

At this instant that very individual entered ; overcome apparently by exertion, his features bearing every mark of horror. Our hero jumped up and with a smile of proud delight sprang to his side—The Count recoiled.—"*Wretch*, how dare you thus approach me ? Begone,

thou murderer ! lest I strike you to my feet."

Now whether he himself happened to be individually mad or whether the whole world had suddenly become deranged, was a question too difficult for Moulles to solve. A dizziness seemed to riot in his brain; a rather disagreeable doubt whether he was asleep or suddenly possessed of a wicked devil? Whether he had the happiness of being alive? or dead? His own identity, an abstruse query.

In this dilemma he again addressed the Count beseeching him "not to carry the joke so far, as really it was beyond the power of his mind to bear it calmly. "

" *Monster!* — *hardened monster!* to speak of joking at such an hour, while yet your hands reek with the blood of your victim; " and the Count cast a look first on the bloody paws of our hero, then threw up a glance, appealingly to Heaven.

"It was my nose " — Victor was about to reply, but his speech was abruptly cut short by the entrance of the Commissary, who, walking

up in the most stately manner to a chair, motioned to the Count to take a seat beside him, and whispered for a moment eagerly with him.

In the mean time they had dragged Moulles to the centre of the semi-circle formed by his late tormentors placing him exactly so as to confront his judge, who still kept talking to the Count, occasionally casting looks of abhorrence on the prisoner, thereby expressing that the conversation referred to him.

"Neither my father in law (that is to be) nor Monseigneur le Commissaire are men of good manners," thought Victor; and he determined on telling them so, one of these days.

At length the Count paused; and the judicial Functionary declared the Court "open," and called upon the principal witness to state the case; where upon, an ill dressed, half soldier, half civilian looking man, stepped forward and stated as follows.

"You must know, Monseigneur, that I am the person employed by the landlady of "La

Cour Impériale " to do , for the passengers that come by the evening diligence. I have served for upwards of twelve years in the 19<sup>th</sup> of the line, and I have — "

" Cease ! " pompously interrupted the Commissaire, " cease the description of yourself, and proceed to the facts relating to the prisoner. "

" Well, Sir, I will proceed. " Last night, about ten o'clock , the diligence direct from Calais arrived here. I had been a long time waiting for it as the Count de Sansou had announced that a friend of his was expected by it, and for whom he had ordered a supper consisting of six dishes. First there was a tête de veau en tortue ; then there was — "

" If you thus digress, I will instantly order you to prison."

" I really beg your worship's pardon. The diligence arrived, and in it the friend of the Count. I handed him out, and having changed my dress, afterwards waited on him at table. "



“ Describe him. ”

“ I will, Monseigneur. He was an old man, bordering on sixty (Moulles looked daggers at him). He had large grey mustachios; but not so grey as his hair, which was very white indeed. He limped a little; but that I fancied arose from cramp. His voice was very soft, and he spoke with a Parisian accent, which made me think him a gentleman, though he had a very vulgar look on the whole, and picked his teeth with his fork. ”

Here Moulles broke out into a loud and passionate contradiction, on which the Commissaire threatened him with all the terrors of the law if he again interrupted the witness; so, my poor hero was most reluctantly compelled to hear himself thus libelled in sullen silence.

“ Well, your honor, after supper I lighted the old gentleman up to his room, and a queer old gentleman he was; for he began to call for extra lights, and warm water, and towels. We didn't however much wonder at this, for

Missus had already told us he was a retired Soap-boiler, and so we thought he wished to give himself a lather, and brought him the things he ordered!" (During this time Victor's tongue was kept quiet with much difficulty.) "After this we left him, and heard him distinctly lock his door. Having then some horses to clean, I went down to the stables, and met Jacques Longueville; and we went to drink together at —"

"Once more, Sir, am I to remind you to strick to the point; to the point, Sir! or am I to commit you?"

"By no means, my Lord; I wont trouble you."

"Speak to the purpose then."

"Well then, Sir, this morning about six o'clock what should I hear but a confounded noise, as if a looking glass was being broken, in N° 25, the room in which the old gentleman slept. So up I jumped; for you must know Pierre had told me before I went to bed that he had heard something like a scuffle in the

stranger's apartment, and soon after, the banging to, of the window, which he thought very odd at the time. "

" It was that damned cat," groaned Victor.

" Silence," roared the Commissaire; and the witness proceeded.

" As I said, Sir, I jumped up and went and knocked at the door of 25, and says I *what's the matter?*—upon that a strange voice, not at all like the Traveller's answered; Nothing! So upon that, away I goes, and calls Pierre, and we consulted together, and then we called Jean—and then we sent for a Gendarme, and then we told Missus—and then "—

" Keep to the subject," ominously hinted the magistrate.

" So I means"—replied the witness; "upon that we all went together and knocked at the door, once—twice—thrice—no reply. So, with one shove we broke it open. Oh! your worship, such a sight! There was a track of blood from the bed to the window. The former was empty; but on it lay a napkin, which together

with the pillow was soaked in blood, and the clothes deranged and bloody too.

“It was my nose,” eagerly interrupted Moulles.

The Commissaire went nearly distracted with rage. “If you speak again I’ll have you gagged. Tis evident, with your *cats* and *noses* you wish to sham madness. But it wont do, it wont do, with *me!*” Then turning to the witness: “Proceed.”

“The body was no where to be found. We looked over the bed and under the bed, but all in vain. There was the looking glass dashed to pieces on the floor, and the blood stains all about, shewing there had been a dreadful struggle, but no corpse. Well, Sir, while we were pondering what to do who should come in but the head waiter and the first thing he remarked was, that the window was open. Upon this, we all flew to it, and there we saw the prisoner at the bar, skulking in the garden. So we jumped out and pursued him. He first tried by running to escape us,

and then hid himself. But all would not do ; for we soon caught him and brought him here and that's all I know of the business".

Here the semi-civilian stopped short , and the Commissaire called for the next witness. Upon which , the Gendarme stepped forward.

" May it please you , Mons le Commissaire , " commenced the Gendarme, touching his hat in a military manner, " I was this day called on to be present at the bursting open of a door in the Hotel of Madame Grosecu , where it was supposed some accident had occurred to a lodger. When I arrived, the door was already forced , and on entering I found the party had quitted the chamber. But for the sake of justice , I thought it right to make a rigid examination of the spot. First, Sir, there was a track of blood from the side of the bed to the window, as described by the last witness." (Moules again inwardly cursed the cat.) "Then, Sir, there was an open razor laying on the table, apparently wiped clean with great care ; and beside it several grey hairs, which were doubtless torn

from the victim's head." (Here a general murmur of horror went round, while Victor remembered with agony the operation of the tweezers.) "This I conceive to be the case ; because I am sure they must have had a violent struggle, the looking glass being dashed down on the ground. I then put this napkin and this pillow-case into my pocket, drenched as you see with blood, and rushed out of the window to join the other persons, whom I now perceived, were in full pursuit of the assassin. Ere I could overtake them they had seized him, and most likely would have taken summary vengeance on him, had I not desired them, in the name of the law, to bring him direct before your worship."

"Very right, very right indeed. Humph ! Have you searched him ?"

"Yes, Mons le Commissaire."

"What did you find ?"

"This pocket book,—this purse—and this letter." And he handed them to the Magistrate, who again handed them over for examination to

the Count, who after a strict scrutiny, allowed a tear to steal down his parchment cheek, as he returned then, saying. "This indeed is the pocket book, and this the purse of my late friend, and this a letter addressed by myself to him."

"Of course — I know that," groaned the prisoner.

A look of horrified conviction was exchanged between the bystanders.

The Commissaire again spoke. "Did you examine his person?"

"I did, his hands were much scratched probably in his struggles with the deceased, who was I understand about his own size. The right wristband of his shirt was also torn, apparently from the same cause, while the palms of his hands, his nails, and even parts of his face were dyed with blood."

"Show your hands; turn up his cuffs," vociferously commanded the functionary.

In a moment he was obeyed. The display was in strict accordance with the policeman's evidence. An ill suppressed murmur of execra -

tion burst from all, as they beheld these damning proofs, while poor Moulles actually, almost swooned, with dismay.

“Has the corpse of Mons Moulles been yet discovered?”

“No, Sir; nor is it probable, since the murderer doubtless threw it into the river, which runs so rapidly till it has passed the falls below G—, that it will take some weeks I suspect to fish it up.”

“Very true. Humph!—did the prisoner say any thing on being seized?”

“He declared he was Mons Moulles himself. But fortunately there were several present, who knew the person of the victim well, and so he failed in deceiving us.”

The Count turned up his eyes, exclaiming: “*Monstrous*” while each bystander added his own individual observation. The Commissaire now told the policeman he might retire, and demanded, in a severe tone, “if the prisoner had any thing to say in his defence?” Upon this Moulles began.



“Yes, your worship, I have every thing to say. In me behold that unhappy wretch, Victor Cæsar Moulles !”

Here the crowd began to cry out “*shame—shame!* dont listen, Commissaire !” And attempted to stop him ; but that dignitary, having waved his hand for order pompously pronounced: “Silence. I command! every person has a right to be heard, and though I almost feel scandalized at thus hearing a savage murderer attempt to screen himself under the pretended mask of madness. Yet hear him, *I will*. So, my friends, dont interrupt him, or think he can deceive me. No, no, Humph ! He cannot deceive *me!*” And he looked mighty wise. Then turning to the prisoner, he bid him go on.

Upon this poor Victor related the whole story of the cat, and touched lightly upon the hair dying operations as his vanity was still too great to tell the *whole* truth ; then he related the circumstances of his nose bleeding—his sudden alteration during the night, etc., etc.

During this rambling account the Noble, the

Magistrate and the people seemed alike impatient and incredulous. A smile of disbelief curled their lips; while every now and then, an exclamation of doubt or anger at this seeming mockery made poor Victor aware how little impression his defence had made.

As he concluded, the Commissaire seemed bursting with a happy thought. At length, Moulles ceased; and he at once exclaimed:

“ I’ll soon end all this. Do me the favor, Mons de Sansou to step into the witness place and be sworn.” This was done. “ Now, Mons le Comte, on your oath is that Mons de Moulles? ” pointing to Victor.

“ Certainly not! ” unhesitatingly answered the Noble.

“ Is he at all like him? ”

“ Not in the least. ”

“ I thank you, Monseigneur; that will do. ”

At this moment a person came in and whispered to the Magistrate, who was heard to utter,

“ Good , very fortunate, shew him in ; ” and in the next instant the valet of the unhappy prisoner entered.

“ Step into the witness box. ” The seemingly puzzled valet instantly did so. “ State your name and quality. ”

“ My name is Martin Poudre. My quality servant to Mons Moulles, of the Chateau de Moulles, near Dunkerque, who arrived here last night. ”

“ Have you seen your master yet ? ”

“ No ; — ere I could jump out of the diligence , I was ordered to come direct here. ”

“ Do you know the culprit standing before you ? ”

“ No ! ”

“ Did you ever see him before ? ”

“ Never ! ”

“ Does he at all resemble your master ? ”

“ Not in the slightest degree : my master is double his age. ”

“ The devil take my youth ! ” thought Victor

as the Commissaire glanced triumphantly towards him. He could no longer resist the impulse and he uttered : " You surely know me, Martin ? "

" Not I, thank God — Mons le Commissaire, I call Heaven to witness, I never saw this man before. "

" It is fortunate for you. For that man, I firmly believe, murdered your master last night."

The poor valet actually fell back senseless. The sudden news, the sudden shock had proved too much for him and he was borne out of the court, as Victor looked on in horrible and paralyzing anxiety, more doubtful than ever whether he was really himself? or whether all human nature had conspired against him?

The Commissaire spoke — " Remove the prisoner; make out the " Procès Verbal " as quick as you can; and let him be tried by the Cour d'Assises now sitting. Let him be strictly guarded; let every weapon, with which he may attempt his life, be carefully removed from

him. " Then, turning to Moulles : " Unhappy wretch! I fear your hours in this world are already numbered. Attempt not to deceive yourself or others by feigning madness; it will not avail; but rather try by a full confession, and a discovery of what you have done with the corpse; to earn that pardon in the world to come, which can never be yours in this. For the last time let me seriously ask you, what have you done with the body of poor Mons Moulles?"

Almost mad—seemingly bewitched—puzzled and lost — poor Victor innocently replied : " Upon my soul I can't tell."

The Magistrate could endure this obstinacy (as he styled it) no longer; and the poor Soap-boiler, amidst the execrations of all around was conveyed instantly to the wretched prison of L — bewailing his unhappy and strange lot; cursing cats and cosmetics; blind witnesses — and morning rambles.

## CHAPTER V.

I will pass over the subsequent trial of my poor hero, which followed immediately on his commitment. The same evidence, I have already related was again gone over. Additional circumstances lent their aid to strengthen the accusation, and ere the Soap-boiler had been three days in the hands of justice, he found himself an *accused, tried, convicted prisoner*; sentenced to die by the axe, for the murder of *himself!!*

Place yourself for one moment in his situation , and I think you will allow his feelings , were by no means enviable. Aware of his own thorough innocence, of his own identity; feeling that it was solely out of love for himself that his friends were thus zealous to take his existence.—About to reap the reward of a long life of toil ; about to grasp the object of his ambition ; beginning as it were to taste the sweets of life—to be thus nipped in the bud ; oh ! it was too bad. To hear in the same breath his own decease deplored , and the sentence of death pronounced against him—oh ! it was too terrible !! To hear himself blessed as a martyr, and cursed as a murderer—regretted as lost—yet hurried to the scaffold; oh ! it was too true !!! and all this from bad hair dye and a furious cat !

At the instant I speak of, behold poor Victor seated within the condemned cell ; the very worst lodging place in the whole prison of G—and decidedly the last any man would seek; his valet and the worthy priest , usually em-

ployed in shriving malefactors standing on either side watching his countenance; hoping to catch some sign of penitence, as they were pleased to call it, some symptom of an inclination to make full confession.

Thus stood matters for some time. At length seeing the obdurate bent of the culprit's mind, the valet broke silence. "Unhappy wretch!" (Moules started) "why not tell me, at once, where you have hidden the body of my late master; tell me only this, and I will myself give twenty francs for masses for your soul!"

"Affectionate, but mistaken creature! I am your master."

"Nay," rejoined the angry valet, "I will not bear this conduct longer. Think not by apeing insanity now, to avert your fate. Die you will" (Victor groaned *once*.) "Die you must" (Victor groaned *twice*.) "And the only chance of your going to heaven is by a full and open confession. Is it not so, holy Father?" The Priest nodded.

"What am I to say?"



"In the first place," asked the Confessor, "who are you?"

"If I tell you, you wont believe me," sighed Moulles.

"First swear on this cross to speak the truth, the rational truth and we will ( Victor kissed the crucifix ) now your name ?"

" Victor Caesar Moulles ! "

Both Priest and Valet seemed overcome with horror, at this daring perjury, committed as it appeared on the very brink of eternity : and they were, again, about to expostulate, when the person, appointed to see the last preparations made, entered accompanied by the prison barber.

On entering the cell, the executioner, for such indeed was he, who now sought the prisoner ; fell on his knees before the culprit and bespoke from him in the usual language his pardon, stating that he was but an instrument of the law, and compelled to perform the office.

Moulles started with astonishment. The Con-

fessor touched his elbow. "Tis customary my son; tis customary. All criminals are expected by our holy church to forgive the act of him, who is but the practical instrument of the law. Nay hesitate not, my son; forgive him?"

"If I do, I do; but, if I do, I'll be d—!"

"Hush! Hush! these blasphemies, unhappy man! I see you are not in a fit state for shriving. On my conscience, I could not do it, at this time. Ere you die, however, I will again see you." And with these words the Monk and the valet withdrew.

As the Friar left the cell, the apparent humility of the "Bourreau" seemed to vanish. With a free and hardy air, he approached the prisoner, dragged off his coat, and began (after taking off his neckcloth) to tie his hands behind him.

"Do you mean to *murder* me?" screamed Victor. "Do you mean to destroy me thus in *secret*? Oh! you savage monster!" Then suddenly starting up and falling at the executioners feet, his mood seemed to change, as he burst

into tears : " Oh! have pity on me, have pity on me. I'll give you all my fortune; but spare my life. "

The man thus appealed to, burst into a loud laugh which sounded blood-thirstily in the ears of the Soap-boiler while his companion coolly produced a razor, which he began to sharpen, and a tin basin probably as it would seem, to catch the blood. These preparations were too much for Moulles, who did not dare look up, but convulsively continued to grasp the knees of him who having ceased laughing, hoarsely spoke thus.

" Stand up, you fool! don't be blubbering there. We're not going to baulk the public of their raree-show to-morrow. I'm only come with the barber to shave your head, you chicken hearted idiot! Heaven only knows what could have tempted you to commit a murder. Your grovelling soul is scarcely above petty larceny! " And again he laughed at his own wit.

" If that's all, " said Victor, rising much relieved. " Why bind my hands? "

“ To prevent your seizing the razor, and cutting your throat; we are up to your tricks, winking knowingly, we know you want to forestall my office. ”

“ If I do I'll be shot, ” impetuously rejoined the Soap-boiler. “ Indeed, — indeed Mister Executioner, I'm a murdered man. ”

“ Yes, — yes, you all *say* that. I'm used to hear these stories. Take care, Jacques ” (addressing the barber, who was during this time busily employed shaving off Victor's dyed locks) “ take care and don't let the suds fall on the black trowsers or it will spoil them, and remember they are my perquisite. I shall wear them the day after to-morrow at the “ Fête-Dieu. ”

Poor Moulles groaned in agony. To hear his very unmentionables thus disposed of, before his face. “ To stand in a dead man's shoes ” is not pleasant, thought Victor; but to strut about in a dead man's trowsers — Faugh!! ”

At length the operation was completed. The Bourreau kindly assured the unhappy wretch

that he would be excessively skilful, and that if he would only keep up his spirits like a man, he'd do the *job* in a minute; and with this consolatory assurance in company with the shaver, the headsman withdrew leaving our hero to his, any thing but pleasing, reflections.

Even the very kind promise, of "being put out of pain in a moment" was any thing but soothing to the Soap-boiler's feelings. Indeed I will not swear that a promise of long enduring suffering would not have been more welcome, more solacing, than thus being immolated "in the twinkling of an eye."

Twice did he grasp his throat instinctively, as the idea of his coming excution occurred. Often did he almost strive to believe the whole a dream; but no; there were the dungeon walls; there too the fetters; and the shaven head; damning witnesses to the startling fact.

Poor Victor uttered many a fervent adjuration and hoped for miracles to save his life.

But alas! none appeared. An hour, and an hour still rolled on. The cold hearted clock announced the fact with its usual sullen indifference; although each time it spoke, poor Moulles felt sure some sixty minutes were abducted from the short span of life allotted to him.

Was it from the exertion of his piety? was it from fatigued nature? In a word was it sleep, or illness, that now overtook my hero, and made him fall insensible upon the floor?

My friends it was epilepsy!! Yes, violent epilepsy! which now shook the frame of the solitary inmate of the condemned cell, and held him struggling in its baneful grasp.

Nature, however, is her "own sweet restorer." This illness did not kill him, it did not rob the executioner. In less than an hour more Moulles had fallen into a feverish sleep, unconscious of the dreadful malady that had visited him, forgetting the awful fate, that awaited him at early dawn.



## CHAPTER VI.

In a room overlooking the Grand Place (about 50 yards square) of the Town of G—, in the principal chamber of the prison, were assembled those interested in the approaching execution. The bell had already begun tolling to announce the soon to be expected transit of a human soul, and sounded with melancholy note, a sort of mourning dirge over him who still was numbered amongst the living, and who

would have felt for more grateful to the said bell had it rung a merry peal in honor of a reprieve, than thus sullenly dinning into the ear of the already much shocked prisoner, the certainty of his quickly coming fate.

The scaffold which had been erected during the night, was surrounded with wooden rails to keep the crowd off; the space, thus left, was to give room to the Gendarmerie and shut out the curious; for many there were who would willingly have touched the victim in their morbid eagerness to see the emotions of a dying man, the mighty pleasant operation of the slicing block.

But to return to the party now assembled in the goal, consisting of the Count de Sansou, the Judge, the Commissaire, the Confessor and the Valet in close conclave, the two executioners, the Governor of the prison, the Turnkey, and others in attendance on them; the subject of their discussion, the best mode by which the prisoner might be induced to confess his crime and tell them where to find the body. This they felt would be far more satisfactory than



allowing the captive to go out of the world protesting his innocence.

After much argument it was agreed that the Confessor, the Valet and the Turnkey should first visit the unhappy wretch and try to soften his obdurate nature. So away they went, determined to effect their object, or to receive their repulse, in the least possible time; as they felt naturally anxious (being Frenchman) not to be impolite which they felt it would be, to keep the amiable crowd waiting unnecessarily long, for their desired exhibition. Besides, the Executioner had not yet breakfasted, and Madame la Bourreau never sat down to that meal without him. The party therefore trotted on in double quick, while those who remained behind, amused themselves in chatting over the news, well pleased with the late victories at sea, both in the Nile and near Trafalgar where they had so completely routed the cowardly English fleets.

A few minutes had scarcely passed, when a rushing along the passage announced the sud-

den, the hurried return of the party. Another instant, and the door was thrown open, admitting one of the most agitated groups ever beheld. The Friar whether from habit or real piety I know not, immediately threw himself upon his knees, and began devoutly crossing himself; ejaculating with great earnestness the prayer beginning, "Oh Lord! who alone worketh great miracles!" and a thousand other formulæ of the church, with a vehemence beyond depicting. The Valet began jabbering unintelligible explanations, and the Turnkey stood with his mouth open, very much in the manner of a second "Priam in the dead of night."

At length the servant was reduced to the painful necessity of speaking plain. All ears were opened while he thus narrated; "You must know, Messieurs, that as soon as the door of the cell was opened I stepped in, intending at once to address the inmate. In front of me stood a figure—but oh! Sirs, how can I tell it? I am sure you won't believe me. There stood,

not the prisoner, but as I live my *Master* ! my own true and living master, just as I had seen him when he left me last, save and except that he had shaved his head. I started back. He called to me. I felt it was an apparition, some horrid deception of the evil one, and so I flew as fast as my legs would carry me and here I am." — And the poor man dropped into a chair.

" Oh ! " groaned the priest, " Oh ! it was a miracle, a blessed miracle ! oh ! it was a— but let me pray, " and again he began to mutter over his pater-noster and his other prayers.

The Turnkey seemed to differ from the Holy father. He only uttered in a sighing tone, " It was the devil. "

Need I tell you what a commotion this sudden communication caused? Need I tell you how conflicting were the opinions, the advice offered? How many were called upon " to go and see, " and how one and all refused the office? There were some present who would face a regiment of men, but

not *one* individual who would face the devil.

In the midst of these arguments, the door was quietly opened and in walked Victor Cæsar Moulles!!! In an instant more, a dozen persons had fled from their seats, affrighted and horrified, joining in the prayers of the Friar, who with closed eyes was busily and lustily singing out, “in nomine Dei Exorciso”, etc., etc.

Perhaps of all the party none were more astonished than my hero himself. He was totally unconscious of the real fact, namely, that (by the same convulsive contortions which had disturbed them), the fit of that night had again brought back his features to their pristine form. He was totally ignorant of this change; which with the loss of his unnatural *black* locks, once more restored him to his original locks. He, therefore, could not understand the scene before him, nor the horror with which the Confessor and his companions had fled, leaving the door of the cell open behind them. To seek for the explanation, Victor had quietly walked out and at a distance followed them,

guided to their presence by the noise their strange narrative had called forth.

“ Oh! Mons de Sanson, Mons de Sanson, have mercy on me! Oh! Mons le Commissaire, turn not away from me! *Indeed, indeed, I'm Victor Moulles*, and no assassin. Upon my soul, I speak the truth; ” and Cæsar began to blubber.

By this time the Count had looked up; the Commissaire perceiving that the person who addressed him, was *bonâ fidé* made of flesh and blood, arose; and though sorely puzzled, began to stammer out an answer, but so confused, so strange did his speech appear to Moulles, that he was totally unable to comprehend it.

The party now convinced that they spoke to an earthly being, began to question the poor Soap-boiler, with respect to the extraordinary way in which he had gained ingress to the condemned cell, and the still more extraordinary exchange he had made with a convicted felon, besides several others respecting his most

strange resuscitation after being foully murdered.

Now what the exact answers to these gentle queries were, I never yet could learn ; but of this I'm sure ; the crowd went away that morning much dissatisfied, in consequence of a reprieve, said to have been received ; and the total silence ever afterwards observed respecting the prisoner, who it appears had most unaccountably vanished, while their indignation was not inferior to their surprise when they heard, some three weeks afterwards, of the marriage of Victor Cæsar Moulles ( a gentleman whom the papers delicately hinted had been supposed by a *strange mistake* , to have been assassinated at L—) with Mademoiselle Cordelie de Sansou , Countess in her own right.

The Confessor, when afterwards pressed on the subject , used to mumble something about miracles, wrought for high purposes, and is supposed to have written to his Holiness the Pope on the subject, as a few years afterwards a new Saint appeared in the Calendar, a Saint Moulles!

so called, as some imagine, after a worthy Soap-boiler of that name who died near Dunkirk in the year 1808, and was canonized after death in consequence of some miraculous passages in his life, most delightful to hear of , most edifying to read !

## THE PHRENOLOGIST.

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Baden-Baden.

. . . . .  
This place, which I have visited by advice of my medical attendants, is certainly one of the most delightful summer residences in Europe. The gaiety of the assembled persons, the constant round of pleasure enjoyed by the visitors, almost tempt the invalid to forget the purpose for which he has sought this lovely spot.

The small circle, here, have had ample food for their loudly expressed wonder, in a very extraordinary discovery, which has just taken place; brought about by a no less science than that of Phrenology; a science which daily gains proselytes in Germany. I have noted down the facts exactly as they occurred.





## THE PHRENOLOGIST.

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I never recollect a warmer enthusiast than Professor Leyden. When he spoke, he seemed to forget all other worldly circumstances, all other subjects, save the one engrossing topic on which he was engaged. His eye, widely dilated, saw no object save the bright imagery created by his fertile brain. His voice was impassioned. His every pulse beat high. The Professor, at the time I speak of, was just two and thirty, and ranked himself as the very leader

of Gall and Spurzheim's energetic disciples. On the subject of Phrenology he was discoursing when I entered the dining room of the Baron Hartmann.

It was a fine summer evening. Strawberries and other fruits decorated the board. The well-iced Johannisberg, the cellar-cooled Lafitte, stood temptingly on a table, around which about a dozen young men with the worthy Baron and the Professor sat.

It appeared that, in the height of his enthusiasm, Leyden, had to please the company, examined their heads; and with many wise looks pressed the bumps, which he declared to be the unerring indications of the human character and passions. Some unfortunate wight in company, however, had evidently shocked the examiner by a demonstration of wicked propensities, for he strenuously refused on this occasion to pronounce upon the several organs, declaring "he might give offence," he "might be wrong;" indeed it might appear invidious;" in short, after making several similar excuses,

the Professor sat down in meditative silence; nor could he again be brought to speak, save and except upon the general merits of the system; a subject on which he never failed to enlarge.

It is a curious fact that I never in my life heard the subject of Phrenology broached without a laugh being raised at its expence, which very naturally annoys the supporters of this theory, and brings on the warmest arguments. It was a discussion of this kind that probably had raised the fire, which flushed the cheek of Leyden on the evening of which I speak.

The conversation had now taken a new channel. A dreadful murder had been committed in the neighbourhood of the Black Forest. A young girl had eloped from her parents some weeks before. The companion of her flight was supposed to be a young man who had been staying in the neighbourhood, he had disappeared about the same time. She had just been found savagely murdered, while

the supposed partner of her guilt had re-appeared and declared that he had with difficulty escaped from the hands of Banditti, who had, without any apparent motive, seized and imprisoned him. To prove this he showed several severe wounds which he had received in the successful struggle he had had, with two of the gang in his endeavour to liberate himself. This story, however, appeared so improbable, that no belief was attached to it, and the young man was hurried to prison, there to abide his trial.

This story had been repeated with painful minuteness by Carl Hoffenon, a handsome young man, who had lately arrived at Baden; whose mild and gentlemanly manners had already won for him the golden opinion of all the society assembled there. No one was more pleased with him than the old Baron. It was even believed that he ranked so high in the good old man's opinion, that it was rumoured he had proposed and was actually accepted by Clara Hartmann with the full sanction of her father,

As a narrator few could excel him. His vivid descriptions lent life to his stories, and when he chose ( as on the present occasion ) he could harrow up the nerves of even the most apathetic , by depicting horrors in their most glaring , most appalling colours.

One burst of indignation , as he concluded , bespoke how truly he had interested his auditory. A thousand execrations were heaped upon the head of the unhappy youth , who appeared plainly , incontrovertibly , from the details given by Carl to be the perpetrator of the bloody deed.

“I’ll go to see his execution myself. I could enjoy the death tortures of such a wretch,” indignantly exclaimed the Prince of Olsebach, a young Russian, as he took a pinch of snuff and handed to his next neighbour his splendid box , which dazzled the eye by the richness of the diamonds encircling it. “ If such a wretch existed on my estates I’d have him racked.”

“ And well would he deserve it ; a cold hearted , cruel assassin,” chimed in another.

“ May he be punished in the world to come ! ” fervently ejaculated Carl.

“ Nay, nay, ” said the old Baron, “ that is saying too much. It is true the man deserves an earthly punishment ; but you are allowing your anger against vice, my dear boy, to carry you too far. ” And the old Noble good naturedly patted Carl on the arm.

Thus various subjects were discussed and argued ; but during the whole evening Leyden spoke not. At last the hour for breaking up arrived ; and according to etiquette the Prince moved first. Ere he did so, he requested the return of his snuff box. The person, to whom he had handed it, declared that he had passed it to the next, who in his turn denied all knowledge of it, as did the rest of the company.

Every one had seen it, every one had handled it, but none could now produce it. The room was searched, the servants had not even entered the apartment, the door had never been unclosed, none had stirred from the

table. The affair began to wear a serious aspect. The old Baron felt his honor was wounded ; but still hoped it might prove to be an ill timed pleasantry. Under this impression, he rose.

“ Gentlemen, some person amongst you has doubtless concealed the box, intending thereby to give our illustrious friend a fright, and in good faith he deserves it for thus carelessly forgetting to look after a trinket said to be worth 50,000 florins ; but as he seems really uneasy about it, I must beg the person, who has taken it, instantly to return it and confess the joke. ” And the Noble affected to laugh. None, however, responded, and Hartmann saw with increased uneasiness, that he must now take up the matter more determinately.

“ My friends, you cannot feel offended when I offer myself as the first person to undergo the ordeal, an ordeal I almost blush to say we must all submit to. *We must be searched!* None but the guilty can feel annoyed at this proposal! ”



Professor Leyden started up, " By Heavens! I'd sooner die! "

Another was of the same opinion and objected to undergoing such an operation, which at the very least implied a doubt.

Poor Hartmann looked like a ghost. He glanced appealingly towards Leyden who now rose. " Let the door be locked, " said he in a grave voice, " let it be well secured. " This was done. " Now, gentlemen, you must either acknowledge the correctness of the measure I adopt, or I; the disciple of a juggling science; perish! " And he drew from his pocket a small pistol. " Nay start not, my friends! against myself alone I mean to use this weapon, and that only in case I wrongfully accuse an individual now present. You may remember before dinner that I phrenologically examined you all. There was little to say about you generally; but there was one amongst you in whom I could not be mistaken; one whom I wished not to have named, whose presence ever since has made me shudder. I see the gentleman to whom

I allude, already turn pale. Nay, attempt not to smile. I am either a villain for allowing a false theory to mislead me, or you Carl Hoffenon are both a *robber* and a *murderer* ! ! ”

A thunderbolt would have caused less consternation. The Baron started up in rage and agony. The Prince believed the Professor had suddenly gone mad ; while the others looked with searching glances alternately at Leyden and Carl. The former had coolly resumed his chair. The latter sat pale , immoveable ; what could it mean ?

Old Hartmann was about to speak in no gentle terms to the man , who thus had insulted his future son-in-law, when waving his hand Leyden quietly added “ Search him.”

The Baron , in his eagerness to defend his protégé, at once flew to do so. Immediately the snuff box fell on the table. The worthy old man sank overcome in a chair. In the breast pocket of Carl’s blouse he had found the box , which the other had unresistingly allowed him to draw forth.

For a few moments, there was a dreadful deathlike pause. The party seemed petrified, while the trembling Carl seemed to struggle with his feelings. At length, as if suddenly awaking, he started up and incoherently pronounced.

“The hand of God is on me ! I would, but cannot, fly his judgement. Professor Leyden speaks the truth. I am a robber and a murderer ! Under the name of Gratz, I wooed and won the peasant maid of whom we spoke just now. In madness I espoused her. Tired, however, in a few short days, of being tied for life to one uneducated and low born ; hearing that Clara Hartmann possessed unbounded wealth, and knowing that my rustic wife alone presented an obstacle to my wedding this fair heiress ; I slew her ! Aye, cruelly slew her, and caused her lover to be seized, to turn the finger of suspicion towards him. Had he not fled ; to-morrow he would have been stabbed. As for robbery, I can only say I long have headed a bold band, whom even now I'll not betray,

although they'll laugh at me with scorn, when they first hear how foolishly I fell into the hellish net that Satan laid for me, and call me fool for not having the power to resist temptation. That cursed box was far too brilliant. Some spell lurked in it, which drew me with a force I could not stand against, and made me rush at once upon my ruin; but why thus moralize; let monks go pray; it is too late for me; let common felons suffer on the block, it is too mean a death for me. Thus I laugh at fate, I'm never unprepared; "and ere a single arm could move to prevent him, he had swallowed the contents of a small phial—which afterwards proved to have been filled with prussic acid.

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There is little to add to his anecdote. The unhappy wretch who confessed himself to be the same who under the assumed name of "Sand" had filled the country with terror, died in tortures too terrible to describe. The

accused ( but innocent ) youth was liberated from goal , and in three months, Clara Hartmann became the bride of the Professor whose love of Phrenology had thus led to the discovery of guilt , the manifestation of innocence , and the acquisition of the prettiest girl in all Germany.

## THE ROUÉ.

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Geneva.

. . . . .  
The following "Will-case" came before me, while I presided at the first French Cour d'assises held in Geneva. As I consider it a curious instance of ingratitude, I think it worth noting; though indeed this continual change of quarters is any thing but pleasant, and leaves me but little time to make sketches of those proceedings, which often interest me. I shall, being thus hurried, give but a short extract from the present case; in form, however, of a tale; which should they leave me time, on my arrival in Belgium, I will try and re-indite at greater length.



# THE ROUÉ.

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## CHAPTER I.

In one of the handsomest "appartements de Garçon," in the Rue Richelieu, sat a party of six bons vivants: the elder of the group had scarcely seen some five and twenty summers; yet well they all appeared initiated in the ways of life; while some of them, who thus sat round the table, almost seemed to taste a pre-



mature old age. Their host, young Jules de Fleurville, though scarcely twenty three, showed furrows sown already by the hand of care, while his pallid hue bespoke an intimacy with deep debauch, and hours of midnight revel. His usual look of apathy, this evening had been cast aside ; his eye was lit with an unholy fire ; he drank, he laughed, he talked, and seemed the very soul of gaiety. The joyous Roué smiled with true delight, as raising high a goblet of Champagne, he triumphantly proposed, “ a happy journey to sweet Madame de Fleurville.” All loudly repeated this his toast : each bumper was quaffed, and any stranger had supposed the sentiment, thus uttered, was one of warm affection. Not so—six hours previous to the dinner that I speak of, Jules had received the news of his wife’s death, and he had summoned the present party to celebrate an event, which thus had freed him from an ugly old spouse, by whose death he not only anticipated entire freedom, but a considerable fortune. — Banished from his paternal roof,

discarded by every member of his family, shunned by those who were acquainted with his many faults, he had indeed found it convenient to marry an old Lady, who, like many more foolish matrons that I know, felt at the age of sixty five the most lively desire to possess a young and handsome husband.—In a word, she wished to purchase a youthful helpmate and protector; while he, the hero of my tale, willingly sold himself to avoid the horrors of a prison. As is always the case, he was careless of her feelings; she was stingy with her purse. He was ashamed of her; she strove by reproaches to win him back; she was jealous, he was inconstant. In fact they were, as all such ill assorted couples are, deservedly wretched.

An actual, though strictly polite separation; had taken place. The small pittance she allowed him, was not indeed sufficient to supply his wants; but still he affected to be content; fearful she might (as she had reserved sole power over the disposition of her money) ultimately withhold it altogether; and in the

mean while got large credits, on the strength of his surviving expectancy. How welcome, then, had been that letter which told him of her demise; the removal of that barrier, which for the last two years had shut him out from free and unrestrained enjoyment!

Need I say, on the present occasion, that the venerable defunct was the principal topic of conversation; need I tell to a discerning reader (for such I'm aware you are) how grossly her memory was insulted? How thoroughly she was held up to ridicule, by those, who hoped by thus decrying her, to please their joyous host, her anything but mourning, widower. At length a pause; and Jules in answer to a question put, replied with gaiety of tone, "You ask me how the fair bride looked, when morning first discovered her a married woman. I faith, I'll tell you, tis a famous joke."—And all were hushed to silence to hear the story which ran thus:

"You must know that, on our wedding night, we slept at Fontainebleau. Fagged with

the idle ceremonies, — the breakfast, — dancing, and the journey down, — I must confess I fell asleep, nor waked till some few hours after Sol had shewn his rays. For the first moment, I scarce remembered that I now was thoroughly a Benedict. Recalled, at last, to recollection, I turned round to behold my sweet companion of the nuptial bed. Guess, gentlemen, my horror, my surprise, when I beheld beside me one, whose jet black colour told me, I had shared the couch of some dark Negress! Chimney sweep! or devil! I started up; my wife did the same (for it was indeed she) and seemed, by her enquiring glance, to ask the object of my terror? I pointed to her face; imagine my astonishment, when smiling she coquetishly replied, “The colour of my cheeks perhaps startle you. Tis always thus. I flush when first I wake, nor can you blame my blushes on such an occasion as the present?” and she affected, coyly, to cover with her hands her dusky countenance. Was I then wedded to the devil? I really began to think so, and was about

to turn away with horror, when she pressed her face to mine! — I could bear no more — I started from the bed, and seizing a large mirror presented it to her. She had no sooner looked in it, and seen herself, than with a frightful scream she let it drop, while the crash that it made, her loud outcry, and my warm expostulations, my violent demands for an explanation, drew to the door a crowd of half dressed travellers and curious waiters. By threats, at once, I came to the solution. It seems some half an hour before the dawn of day, my wakeful bride had stolen from her bed and seriously desiring to enchant me with her roseate tint, had rubbed upon her parchment face what she considered to be rouge! Unluckily for her, my valet had removed the box in which she knew the preparation was to be found, and in its place, by accident, had put my *English charcoal toothpowder*. With this she had well daubed her cheeks; and thus, my friends, she nearly frightened me to death, the very first morning after our marriage. To make matters

square, however, and to hush up the business, the old lady shelled out (with some reluctance, I must own) two thousand francs, and so the matter ended. " — The whole party were convulsed with laughter at the Roué's story, and again they resumed their deep potations.

Story followed story, good fellowship reigned; the better to encourage drinking, songs then ensued. A love-sick looking youth, of scarcely nineteen years, whose hand however shook already with the force of wine, enchanted all the veterans of debauch by trolling forth the following stanzas; while his comrades loudly joined in chorus.

Let Stoics swear, I'll not believe  
That truth can ever dwell,  
As they assert—who would deceive,  
Within a distant well.  
No, no; tis in the goblet pure,  
She holds her sacred shrine.  
For falsehood never could endure,  
The taste of generous wine.

See foaming bright, she sparkles now  
She lifts your spirits high,

She wreathes your lips, she smooths your brow,  
And lights your joyous eye.  
Then fill the cup ! Here's mirth and love !  
With grape their garlands twine ;  
For both descended from above ,  
Now flow in gen'rous wine.

At the conclusion, many a hearty cheer bespoke how truly they admired it; they drank his health in noisy mirth, and for a few minutes the poor boy, thus hurrying to an early grave, believed himself the hero of the party. As is usual on such occasions, wine proved its powerful effects, by opening at once the hearts and mouths of those, who thus with joy sacrificed both taste and propriety, at the Altar of Bacchus. Ribald jests, and songs (unheard except in such an hour) boastings, and oaths of confirmation, false as strong, succeeded; and the glassy eye, the faltering tongue, the hiccup interruption of the majority, bespoke how well they had kept up the deep debauch. Each vaunted of his amours,

“ And talked of charms he never knew. ”

The leading Belle at Court, the lovesick

grisette of the Rue Vivienne, the first dancer at the Opera, equally appeared to have bestowed their favors on some lucky member of this jovial group. Nor am I quite sure that, when a young Advocate spoke of the charms, the fascinating attentions, of a certain lovely Duchess, that his worthy host, determined not to be out done, did not murmur some hint of "how the Empress herself, had cast admiring glances on him, when he had sat just opposite to her at the Académie de Musique." In a word, all talked together, all boasted their good fortunes, amidst the fair, and earnestly attempted to out do, in deeds of gallantry, his worthy friends assembled round the table.

Unluckily, however, a gay Cuirassier touched upon the name of one, whom Jules considered as his "Lady Love;" and mentioned certain gallantries, which had passed between them. De Fleurville, who could bear to hear his wife abused, would not however brook a syllable against his mistress; and warmly resenting the insult, as he called it, thus passed upon her, he



entered the lists in her defence. From reasoning, they came to argument. Jules was violent and overbearing ; the officer cool, sarcastic, and cutting. He would not retract a single sentence that he had uttered ; he merely smiled, in manner most contemptuous, when his antagonist spoke of the virtues, the chastity, of her who at best, was Fleurville's " Chère Amie. " Unaccustomed to opposition, warmed by the wine that he had drank, the Widower could no longer stand the obstinacy, as he termed it, of his adversary ; but a few words more, and the goblet that he held was discharged with true precision at the temple of his opponent, from whose forehead the blood now flowed. All was confusion. Tis true, their host already felt repentant. The violated hospitality, he now stood charged with, sorely galled him ; yet determined rather to bravado through the business than retract, he curled his nether lip, and in silence, allowed the wounded boaster to be carried out. Harmony had fled ; half sobered by this serious interruption to their

hilarity, an awful silence ensued, until a happy idea suggested itself to Jules, who now found himself awkwardly situated; a proposal to adjourn to Frascati. The motion was gladly caught at, and adopted, and the party sought the horrid sink of vice.

This splendid establishment was in its zenith, at the time I speak of. Madame Dumont, whose taste was far and wide acknowledged, held the directing reins, and all was elegance and harmony, within this luring Pandemonium. Even respectable females, occasionally then, visited this house; which has since become the resort of every fille-de-joie, who chose (or choses still) to enter it.

“Rouge Gagne,” “Couleur Perd,” cried the old Croupier shovelling (or rather raking) up the stakes as Fleurville entered. “Messieurs, faites le jeu; le jeu est fait;” and he again began dealing out the cards at “Rouge et noir,” or, as the Frenchmen call it, “Trente et un.” Noticing, however, with an indirect look the youthful Widower, whom he seriously hoped,

one day, to rob of all his future fortune, he exclaimed, intending thus to lure him, " *La banque est malheureuse, ce soir.* " But Jules had thrown himself upon an ottoman, and already had commenced a gallant train of conversation with some easy fair one, who received, with condescending smiles, his fulsome flattery. A look, however, from the Croupier, warned her of her duty, and, with winning speech, she urged her new-found lover to try his luck. Paid by the house, she felt herself compelled to bring the victim to the table, where a score of wretches sat, who once had boasted fortune, rank, and honour; but by losses had become insensible and callous, and thought to prey on others was but fair, since they already had been preyed upon. Glued to the table, still they sat, although these dreadful objects, now were pennyless.

Jules was far too much excited to sit down, and play; he rather felt inclined to stroll, and chat, and drink the iced champagne, which was at the command, gratuitously, of those who

made Frascati their resort. He therefore, turned away from all solicitation, and was about to join some other friend, when he saw an officer of well known rank and courage enter, who coming straight up to him, delivered a note; its purport was to demand satisfaction for the insult he had passed upon the young Cuirassier, who anxiously panted for the coming light to wipe away the stain his honour had received. The bearer bowed; informed our hero that he acted in capacity of second to the offended party, and demanded an immediate answer.

Without hesitation, Jules declared his readiness to meet the man whom he had insulted; fixed the first hour of daylight for the time; swords for their weapons; and the Champ de Mars as place of rendez-vous. These preliminaries arranged, the officer made his bow and left the room. Fleurville asked young Montalbert to be his second, and in an instant more, repaired to play, convinced that if he shirked the game, some envious friend might construe

his resolution, into agitation, caused by his coming duel.

As he approached the small arena of the card table, he beheld a somewhat novel sight.— Upon his knees, in tears, his grey head bent in sorrow, and his hands uplifted, he saw a father, who had here followed an only and beloved son, obtained admission, and now in solemn prayer, besought his child to leave the fatal spot; reminding him how fearfully he was ruining not only his aged parents, but a wife and helpless infant. The Gambler however turned a deaf ear to these pleadings of nature. Afraid to meet the scorn of his profligate companions, he spurned his old Father, while a crowd of “Employés” now quick surrounded and ejected; him who strove to save his child. In some weeks after, Fleurville beheld this self same player a mutilated corpse! a self destroyed, a wretched suicide! — But to return.

Fortune, for a short moment, shed her brightest beams upon Jules. He staked, he

gained, he doubled, and still won. At length, with all the fell caprice, for which the blind Dame is known, she turned her favours from him; loss after loss succeeded, and, ere another hour had elapsed, de Fleurville found himself without a sous. But what of that? To-morrow's sun would probably put him in possession of a noble fortune. Yet he remembered, ere that sun should rise to the meridian, he had to risk his life and perhaps might fall beneath the weapon of a former friend. "Pshaw!" muttered he again, "and if I do?—why then I am provided for?" and with this consolatory idea, the youth again re-entered his apartment, and beheld, with feelings of deep disgust, the remains of his convivial banquet. Here lay the chair his passion had upset; the floor was strewn with fragments of the broken glass; the table still betrayed some spots of blood. In fact, the scene was one of past debauch, the sad memento of a drunken revel. De Fleurville's mind recoiled. He even thought of her, who at

this moment , lay a corpse unburied ; and lighting a candle , at the trembling lamp , he hastened to his room ; looked for a moment at his sword , which hung against the wall , and setting his alarum to the hour of six ; sprang into bed , and slept as soundly , as the guiltless babe.

## CHAPTER II.

The great clock of the "Hôtel des Invalides" had just struck seven. A Cabriolet drove, with fierce rapidity, into the Champ de Mars. The horse was suddenly reined up, and Jules de Fleurville, followed by Montalbert, quick jumped out. Already on the ground, the young Cuirassier stood, attended by his second, and the surgeon of his Regiment. Beside him, lay a cloak, which he had thrown



off on the approach of Jules ; and at a little distance stood his servant with a case of swords ; for some years ago, that weapon was preserved, and guarded , as a pistol now is taken care of. The scene was indeed melancholy ; the slowly breaking light had only half revealed the golden Dome of the proud Hospital, which flanked the field ; the clouds still hung upon the sluggish Seine ; the trees surrounding , seemed to be clothed in almost mourning leaves , and all bespoke the eve of a raw and wintry day.

The parties spoke not ; a cool and solemn bow was all that passed. A tacit signal , and the ground was chosen ; and now began the usual preparation. Each party first took off his coat, his cravat, and his waiscoat, undid his wristband , and rolled his shirt sleeve almost to his shoulder. The swords were poised and delivered by the seconds ; each grasped his weapon , and with his left hand, bound up his right with napkins brought on purpose. A word was whispered ; the friends withdrew to some short distance , and the combatants stood

upright , in silent expectation of the signal. The first was given, and they stood " en garde." The second , and the fight began. The officer , whose forehead still was bandaged up, was first to thrust. De Fleurville parried, feinted to return , and stood again on guard. The young Cuirassier tried " en tierce ;" again he failed. " En quarte ;" but still without success. Infuriate , then , he made a deadly plunge. A parry, and a point from Jules, and his adversary was pierced through the centre of his heart ! a moment's struggle , and he fell a corpse. Jules withdrew his weapon , wiped it carefully, and handed it to Montalbert , who , with the others, had flown to the spot. His friend at a glance, saw how fatal had been the result ; murmured a word to Jules , and, waiting not even to put on his coat, De Fleurville and his second jumped into their carriage , and , almost ere the surgeon could pronounce his brother officer a corpse , the surviving Duellist was driving with the utmost speed towards the " Rue de Richelieu."

At the "Porte Cochère," stood Fleurville's valet; who informed his master that a Courier had arrived with letters from Tours (in the neighbourhood of which poor Madame had breathed her last) and waited for him in the antichamber. Jules hurried up; nothing could be more opportune; he doubtless brought the proper documents, wherewith the Widower might instantly raise cash; a most necessary step, to be immediately taken, as he felt the necessity of a temporary flight. Springing up stairs therefore, without delay, he sought his room, seized the packet from the messenger, and unmindful of his servants presence tore it open, read for an instant with an air of deep astonishment and indignation, then throwing down the letter, hastily uttered in a despairing tone, "Then I am a beggar! — Curses on her memory! I am pennyless!" Suddenly checking himself, on perceiving that his valet waited, he desired to be left alone; and throwing himself back in his chair, gave way to tears of rage and mortification. No time, however, was to be

lost. He had often borrowed money from his servant, to supply a days amusement, at the Gambling house; had ever paid him back with some small interest for the loan, and felt the certainty of getting now a sum sufficient at least to carry him from Paris. With haste he rang, and Pierre appeared. "Give me two hundred francs, and order me post horses." — "I'm sorry I have no money," stiffly replied the valet. "No money! pshaw, I know far better; did I not give you near five hundred francs last week? what have you done with that?" "I am not a money lender," and his manner assumed a careless insolence. Jules, who had not at first perceived his altered tone, now suddenly became awake to his behaviour; summoned his haughtiest look, and commanded the fellow instantly to leave the room. "Not till you've paid me," answered Pierre, "here is my bill, and I desire instantly my cash; already it amounts to near 600 francs," and he laid the bill on the table and coolly crossed his arms. Jules felt his passion rising, and, with difficulty,

repressed it. "What means this conduct scoundrel?" grinding, as he spoke, his teeth. "Oh!" cried the servant almost whistling the interjection, "oh! oh! you're in a passion are you?" and he took a chair. "As for a scoundrel, Mons De Fleurville, take a fool's advice, and look at home; with regard to money, look abroad. No soul, that knows you, *now* will trust you. 'Twas well enough when the old woman was alive; but now she's dead and has disenherited you, tis quite another matter." "Rascal! who told you this?" "The Courier, to be sure; who even now is breakfasting with the Porter, and before another half hour, all Paris will know it. The groom tells me also, that you have killed a man; so, before other creditors come, I beg you will give me my money, or"—"Or what?" violently demanded Jules. "Or I'll let the gendarmes up, who only wait my signal to enter," coolly rejoined Pierre, measuring each syllable. "That you shall never do." De Fleurville seized, with a herculean grasp, the astonished servitor, threw him with force

into the adjoining room, locked the door, and jumping out of the window, which opened on some leads, soon scrambled down into the narrow street, which ran behind the court yard. Already had he heard a knocking at his door : he had but time, as I've described, to reach the ground ere the officers of justice had burst in ; but the bird was flown ; and while they raised and strove to sooth the wounded and angry valet, Jules de Fleurville rushed through the streets of Paris, a beggar ! and a homicide !



### CHAPTER III.

While Jules, thus Cain-like, fled through Paris pursued at once by myrmidons of justice, and a latent feeling of remorse, his Father, the worthy Baron de Fleurville, remained in strict seclusion at his villa, near Geneva, consoled and comforted alone by an old and cherished friend. Antonio Armande; for such was his name, had shared the hours of early youth with him, whom now he strove to solace. At school toge-

ther, intimately known, before the heart becomes disguised to please a world of falsehood, Martin Fleurville and the young Antoine were sworn brothers, in their earliest years. Half a century had elapsed, and still that friendship was unabated. 'Tis true, the Baron had become a soldier, and had "fought in many a gallant field of fight;" 'tis true, Antoine had suddenly, at an early age, become a Protestant Clergyman. Fleurville could swear, and drink, and play the rake; Armande was simplicity itself, and sought no higher prize than peaceful contentment; yet warmly did they esteem each other, and now that age had sobered the one, and somewhat exalted the spirit of the other, they still remained the best, the truest friends.—Armande had heard, with grief, of Jules de Fleurville's profligacy; with agonizing feeling, he had learnt the fact, that scarcely were his mother's ashes cold, when he had basely succeeded in seducing her Niece, who shared the Baron's roof. None could be surprised to find that, in a moment of well merited anger, his



friend had driven from his door, a son, whose conduct had for years been hurrying a parent to her grave, and now, ere yet her form had mouldered into kindred earth, had brought a fresh disgrace upon his family. Armande was at his Cure, in Berne, when first he learnt the dreadful tidings. He hesitated not, however, to make the necessary arrangements, and in a few weeks afterwards he was established at the mourning Baron's residence, eager to condole and sooth his broken spirit.

The worthy pastor had another object to gain. His christian patience and well regulated mind could scarce conceive how deep a Father's anger yet could burn ; and, clinging to the precepts of his Heavenly Master, his great aim was to bring about a reconciliation.

The Baron, in his anger, had made vows innumerable never again to see his child ; but Armande doubted if a broken oath was not far better than an unforgiving parent. He also knew (for so the Baron had informed him) that by this fell schism he had become the heir of all

de Fleurville's wealth. But, then again, he thought the consciousness of having brought about so good a deed as that which now he strove to effect, were worth a score of fortunes.

At first, his friend refused to hear the name of Jules, and would have even cursed that name, had not the worthy man restrained him, accustomed for years, to lend a willing ear to his advice, by slow degrees the Clergyman persuaded him to reason; thence, by a thousand ways, he led him to dwell upon the virtues (alas but few) which young de Fleurville had evinced in childhood's years. Sometimes, he almost succeeded in softening the old man, who could not still forget that though he was a villain; that villain was his son.

In this his task of charity, Antoine was unremitting. Hours, weeks, nay months rolled away, ere he succeeded in his desired object. At length, that moment came; and the aged noble consented, once again, to receive his son, if, like the Prodigal, he was ready to confess

his crimes, and anxious to amend his ways. In such a case, the Baron would again place him in his bosom, and leave him all his fortune.

The Pastor, eager to set out on this his errand of kind mercy, himself to bring the truant back, was stepping into the chaise, when Fleurville expressed a wish to see him for a moment, in his study. He entered. Emaciated and feeble; in his high backed chair, sat his earliest, his sincerest friend; a parchment lay before him on his open desk.

“Antoine, I thus solicited your presence to request a favor. Here is my Will, in which I leave you my sole heir.”

“But you have promised to revoke it, and to reinstate your son?” “Most true, and so I will; but mark me well, and fail not to comply with this my last desire, for I feel I shall not live another year. Take this Will, preserve it; I know not why, but still I feel your doing so, would smoothen my passage to the grave; in any case t’will be a memento of my friendship to look upon, and recur to.”

What could the Curate say ? He felt it would not be right to oppose his wishes. So placing the Will in his pocket , he took an affectionate leave of his old friend , and hastened to reach the Capital , and bring back young Jules in time to receive his father's forgiveness , and his blessing.

Three weeks had elapsed since the arrival of Armande in Paris ; and yet no tidings of him whom he sought. He had visited the Hôtel where Jules had resided , and received , with no small pain , an exaggerated account of all the youth's excesses. He had caused insertions in the several daily journals , but to no purpose. They had indeed met , his eye for whom they were intended. But naturally fancying them to be a subtle plan , laid by the police to entrap him , Jules not only left them unanswered , but even sought a deeper seclusion. Thus foiled in his attempts to discover the truant ; too well aware how improbable was individual search , where justice herself had failed in tracking ; anxious once more to return

to his little flock, whom for a long season he had, as it were, deserted; the worthy Pastor made his arrangements to quit Paris; again to seek those social virtues, which seemed to be unknown in the French Metropolis.

On the evening previous to the day, which Armande had fixed upon for his departure, as he was slowly passing along the Boulevard du Temple, not a little amused it must be owned by the various exhibitions, which but a few years back decked this favourite promenade; and while it pleased the eye, gave bread to thousands; amused, I say, by these (to him) most novel sights, Armande had loitered on his path and the clock struck eleven, ere he thought of seeking his Hôtel. Hé was about to do so, when a scream of agony proceeded from a neighbouring Café, succeeded by an uproar almost paralyzing. All around flocked to the spot, and the old man was hurried almost unconsciously into the scene of strife.

Here he found that the scream, that he had

heard, proceeded from a female, who with rouged cheeks and smart apparel, habitually presided at the bar. Supported at this moment in the arms of some gallant beau, this (would be) sensitive creature kicked and squalled, glad that an opportunity had been afforded her by the present tumult for a display of those fine feelings, which she had so often admired on the stage. Her cries, however, were more than drowned by the noisy oaths and imprecations of the contending parties; who, in their eagerness to reach and destroy the alleged culprit, had upset the marble tables stained with beer, and strewed around a shower of Dominos, which lay scattered on the floor with cards and broken glasses, giving to the pavement an almost tessilated appearance.

The great focus however, of attention and curiosity were the belligerent parties, about whom so dense a crowd had pressed, that the Curate had ample time to collect the cause and particulars of the riot, ere he got sight of the combatants. It appeared, that a stranger,

supposed to be a sharper, had entered and engaged in billiards with a young student of the "École de Médecine." They had continued to play for some time. The unknown gambler had won large sums of money from the youth, when suddenly, he was detected in the act of altering the score; in a moment the fact was proclaimed, a dozen hands had collared the accused; blows were showered on him on all sides, and he already cried for mercy, as his form met the startled, the horrified, view of Antoine Armande, who recognized at a glance, in the supposed sharper, Jules de Fleurville! The trembling old man was about to step forward and declare his acquaintance with the object of their suspicion, when he was rudely pushed aside by a fierce looking man of herculean proportions; who, stepping up to Jules, interposing between him and his accusers, seizing with a rough hand and throwing from him those who held the youth a prisoner, he turned an angry glance upon the surrounding, and astonished group, and fiercely demanded

“ who dared to say a word against his friend ; whom here he avouched to be an honorable and an upright man ? ” and curling his mustachio’s with an air of military recklessness , offered to “ maintain the same with heart and hand ” and as if to give more proud defiance to his speech , threw open his great coat , thereby displaying a ribbon of varied colours , which announced him as a knight of several military orders . At once the crowd drew back , almost ashamed at having thus suspected one so well , so manfully supported , while the friend , who had so timely interposed , drawing his arm through that of De Fleurville , in a moment more had quitted the Café .

Armande closely followed them , and as they left the door , eagerly uttered the name of “ Jules , ” at the same time laying his hand upon the truants arm . In an instant , his military companion had fled , and Fleurville was about to do the same , but turning round for a single instant , to see who it was who had thus recognized him , he beheld , to his no small delight , the



countenance of the worthy Pastor ! He checked his first impulse which was to follow him, who was already, far beyond the reach of pursuit, and with eagerness pointing to the crowd who now began to leave the Coffee House, in which this curious scene had taken place, besought Armande to call a coach. This done, he speedily jumped in, and in a moment more they drove in the direction of the Clergyman's Hôtel.

“ Your friend, I fear, will be pursued, and perhaps annoyed by the persons who for your sake, he just now insulted ? ” simply observed Armande.

“ Pshaw! no fear of that; *he's up*,” knowingly replied de Fleurville.

Now although the good old Pastor, did not exactly understand the meaning of the term, he thought the tone in which the word was uttered strange, and anxious by degrees to dive into the mode in which Jules had passed the weeks of his seclusion, and calculating that the best plan to arrive at the solution was to fathom the

character of his acquaintances, he innocently observed, " In what regiment does your kind friend serve ? "

" In none, " coolly replied the youth.

" Those decorations then? Is he not a chevalier ? "

" Oh Lord! yes a Chevalier d'Industrie! " and the reckless roué laughed at his own wit.

The old man, at once, read, the profligacy of his character in this unblushing avowal of a connection with a common swindler, and he paused for a moment ere he added with a sterner voice. " We must quit Paris to-morrow; your father wishes to see you? "

" Indeed! " carelessly replied Jules, " then the governor's sick I suppose; or in a forgiving humour. Its deuced lucky; it suits my plans. Besides, it's always right to strike while the iron is hot, or he may get well and grow fierce again; for according to the English lines

" The Devil was sick, the Devil a monk would be,

" The Devil was well, the Devil a monk was he ! !

“ But I forgot. Have you a passport ? ”

Armande disgusted at his levity, merely bowed assent; and Jules rapidly added, “ I don’t mean a regular, formal passport, describing my *name, age and qualities*, on which I should be seized at the very first barrier, and carried to La Force; but one for yourself, in which I could squeeze a fictitious name, to facilitate my escape from this cursed Country. ”

The Pastor scarcely could contain himself; but determined to repress his rising feelings of disgust, he quietly replied, “ The name of my servant, who is sick, and will be unable to quit Paris for some time, is inserted in my passport: and though I am unused to deception, yet to screen the son of my old friend, I will, if so you wish it, pass you off for him, and thus, I hope, elude the vigilance of the police — ”

“ Done, my worthy old buck, ” cried Jules, slapping him on the back, and winking knowingly, as the coach stopped, “ remember, I’m your servant. But I forgot. — The name ? ”

“ Jean Blaseus. ”

“ Good ! — Now for some supper, for I’m sorely hungered , and then for bed. ” Within an hour afterwards Jules de Fleurville slept, for the first time, during three months, under a respectable roof.



## CHAPTER IV.

With the sun's first rays, the worthy old man, and the returning prodigal left Paris. They displayed their passport, were duly inspected, and passed the barrier in safety. The fatigued youth determined on finishing his interrupted nap in the corner of the carriage (a sort of travelling cabriolet) overcome by many a nights vigil, and desirous, for a time to escape the expected questions of the good Pastor; only awoke as they rattled over the stones of the

rather picturesque town of Châlons ( the capital of Champagne ) where it was agreed they were to take their mid-day meal. Here Armande remarked, with sickning horror, the already shaking hand, the drunken thirst of a professed Roué, the total absence of healthy appetite and a craving desire to wash away, with burning drinks, the memory of the past. Already wine appeared to have lost its stimulating powers, on a palate, but too well accustomed to more powerful liquors. The good man turned away with a sigh from the contemplation of him, whom he justly feared, was lost to virtue, and to hope for ever. He made, however, no remark ; no word of reproach passed his lips : and in another half hour they were again " en route."

Towards evening, Jules began more freely to converse ; and as he received no check, he boldly rattled on. His exploits amidst gamblers, drunkards, and actresses, he triumphantly recounted. The deeds of his companions, the losses he had sustained, and the girls he had

ruined, each held its turn in his conversation; and he narrated with unblushing effrontery, scenes, which raised the blush of indignant shame upon the cheek of him, who held a solemn silence, till the young Swiss breathed the name of one, whose family were members of the old man's little flock. Feeling naturally anxious for the fate of him, whom he had often nursed upon his knee, he eagerly enquired after him. "He's dead," coolly replied Jules; "about a month ago, he found courage to poison himself, and so saved trouble to the headsman. Indeed I never could have believed that he had really mustered up resolution to kill himself in earnest, if I had not seen him dead myself."

"Poor boy!" sighed the Clergyman, "so young! and such a fate! tis terrible, far from his home, no friendly hand to close his eyes! No—"

"Not so," interrupted Jules, "I faith we closed his eyes and buried him like an honest fellow, in the river."

Armande uttered an exclamation of surprise.

“ You seem astonished ; it’s our way. We always wake them for a day or two, then chuck them into the river. But I forgot ; you are not one of us.”

“ Indeed, I understand you not ,” solemnly replied Armande. “ It seems you have performed some horrid rites over the poor boy ; but beyond this I am ignorant. If, however, you can tell me anything respecting this hapless youth, I shall be glad to convey the intelligence to his friends. For any information , which may lead us to conjecture how he came to commit this rash act , I am sure his relations will feel obliged.”

“ Oh , if you wish to know that , I’ll tell you all about it. You must know, when Charles Langlois arrived in Paris , about six months back , he wished to become a member of our club ; so I introduced him , and got him regularly inscribed , as an out and outer of the hell fires. ”



“ What ? ” cried Antoine recoiling with horror !

“ The hell fires ! Oh , I forgot to tell you , our society was called , “ The hell-fire Club , ” after one established of the same name in England\*.—We were a jolly set of dogs, caring neither for man or devil ; and consisted of twelve members, when Charles joined us. Unfortunately, soon after, several unpleasant circumstances happened. We were sworn , by every oath and penalty, ( for to tell you the truth we didn't attend much to the former ) to do each other's bidding. Thus bound , one of our members , unfortunately , took it into his head to make a friend of his attempt to rob his father. Surprised by his parent in the fact , he had but one way to escape , he stabbed the old man to the heart , and fled from France for ever. On another occasion, two of our best fellows had a dispute as to the immortality of the soul ; one denying it altogether; the other sup-

\* Stricly a fact. The late Lord B—was the president.

porting the principle of transmigration. To decide their argument, they, hand in hand, jumped into the Seine in presence of the Club. It is true, when they were once in, they repented I believe, and called on us to save them; but as they had previously tied their hands, and as our people made it a rule never to interfere, we permitted them to sink to eternity, and left them next day to their fate at the Morgue without claiming them, to wake them; considering them to have disgraced us, in dying thus chicken-hearted. Our President was sent to Toulon for life, for having committed a forgery; our secretary was killed in a duel; and our best singer had been struck blind with lightning! and all this in three months! Our circle being thus reduced, as I have said, to seven members, we began to feel a little dull, and our meetings irregular. About this time, Charles turned, as we thought, religiously mad, and went moping about all day, like a condemned felon; but we took no notice of it. One evening however, as I was passing by his lodgings, I was surprised

with cries of murder ! and I saw Charly's head , thrust out of his garret window, calling loudly for help. I ran up. Guess my surprise ! (I really thought I should have died of laughing.) There sat my friend , with his throat cut from ear to ear ! We enquired how it was , and it turned out , that being in a desponding mood , he had attempted to destroy himself before a looking glass ; but , on seeing the blood gush forth , he had felt alarm and gone to the window and cried "*murder !*"—The doctor on his arrival sewed up his throat , and he recovered ; but we teased him so , that three weeks afterwards , he took a dose of prussic acid , and died in right good earnest. So , forgiving him his first cowardly attempt , we went down , claimed his corpse , surrounded it with tapers , and stuck it up , dressed in its best clothes , with a pipe in its mouth , and after pouring a glass of brandy down its throat to the health of "*the hell fires,*" we waked it for six hours ; and then , as is our custom , threw it into the Seine after disfiguring the face so that it might not

be recognized. But the body, being found, and the police kicking up a row about it, we thought it more prudent, as we were now only five members, to disperse.—So now I've told you all that I know about Charly Langlois."

The old man shuddered, and drew himself more closely in the corner, to avoid the touch of one who thus appeared to glory in misdeeds. He therefore sat in silence, unheeding the continual talk of Jules. Nor noticed, except by monosyllables, the questions which he put to him. On the second evening, they arrived at Dijon; supped, and as agreed upon, again set forth, determining to travel through the night, the Clergyman's anxiety being great, to reach old Fleurville in the shortest time, his young companion, equally desirous to quit a country, where he might expect each instant to be seized.

After several hours of travelling, they had passed the confines, and began the slow ascent of the Jura mountains. Day light had broken, and Armande watched the countenance of the

young Swiss, hoping to catch some passing emotion, at thus again beholding

“ His own — His native land. ”

But alas! no smile of pleased recognition took place, no virtuous interest at again beholding the “ hills of his father’s, ” stirred de Fleurville.

He seemed intent upon his cigar, which he puffed with all the gravity of a pure Hollander. Once only did he take it from his mouth : it was to point out to the pastor, an apparently inconsequential barn which stood some hundred paces from the road. “ That is our Vendita. ” The old man understood him not. The youth rejoined; “ T’was there I first was made a *Charbonnier* ; twas there I first received the grasp of “ *Le bon Cousinage*, ” and swore by *Water, fire, and salt*, to root out every tyrant monarch of the earth. Aye, and would have done so, had they not wickedly taken my name out of their golden book, and put me down in their black list, along with the *anneamenti*;

and burned my name for a mere whisper. But I'll be revenged, and if I am ever in a situation to see the Emperor, I'll expose them yet. "

Antoine Armande was nearly electrified. The rumours that such a body existed had indeed reached him; but now to find himself thus seated next a member of this dangerous and dreaded sect, almost caused him an emotion of fear, and he again relapsed into strict silence. The young man saw his humour, and again took up his cigar, cursing in his heart the taciturnity of him, whom he already in his own mind had set down as a "sulky old fellow."

At length they arrived at the summit of the chain, and beheld before them, perhaps, the most beautiful view existant. From this elevated situation they could see, as it were, at their feet, the finest Lake in Europe, the far famed Lemman, stretching her glassy bed for several leagues. The sun had risen, and shed his rays upon the scene. The town of Geneva, and the dotting villas skirting the magic water,

which gave back, in vivid reflection, the snowy top of great Mont Blanc ; imaged in all its tints and shadows, in the bosom of a lake, full fifty miles from where it reared its giant head ! (a fact unprecedented I believe in nature) with all the minor hills, and rich woods, which encircle this fair spot ; gave to the scene, that met their view, almost the air of enchantment.

Antoine, once more, addressed the youth. " Look, my young friend ; see you, between you crags, a small château ? " 'Tis the new villa the Baron bought last year , and now resides in. " Jules stretched forward eagerly, and examined it ; and the pastor , feeling contented to see his anxiety, good humouredly added, " What think you of it ? I'm sure your father will be glad if you admire it ? "

" Then the old chap must wait long enough," carelessly replied the youth , " for I think its a dreary looking, vulgar hole ; " and he threw himself discontentedly back.

The Pastor actually groaned ; and as the

carriage rolled up to the door, he uttered a thanksgiving that he was about so soon to part with one, who seemed the soul of low lived profligacy.



## CHAPTER V.

A few days had elapsed; Jules had settled himself comfortably beneath his Father's roof; and though he sighed for the gaieties he had been compelled thus suddenly to relinquish, yet he wore an air of contentment, not altogether false, for he evidently saw that the old Baron could not exist many weeks longer, and then; yes *then*; he might again plunge into those excesses, which from his soul he loved, and

panted for. One only obstacle seemed to check his future dreams of bliss, the presence of Armande. But young de Fleurville dared not shew the slightest inattention to him, who seemed to rule the Baron with an undisputed sway; well knowing that as yet he stood on slippery ground, and held an almost doubtful rank under the roof of his still stern Parent. No follies therefore marked his path. He seemed a real penitent, desirous to reform; and even the curate believed in the sincerity of him, who inwardly cursed the mask he was for a time forced to put on.

Matters stood thus, when, one morning, Jules received a summons to attend his father in his study. He obeyed, and found the old man seated in his easy chair, propped up with pillows. His countenance but too plainly telling, that death had placed his seal upon another victim. Before him lay, his papers of importance, and materials for writing. Beside him sat his cherished friend, the worthy pastor. The room was darkened to spare the eye-sight

of the invalid. No fire was allowed to annoy the Baron. The room had evidently been left untouched, the less to disturb him. The old portraits were undusted, and the black curtain, which usually concealed the likeness of the late Baroness, was only now half drawn. In a word the scene was one of melancholy solemnity, and the blood flowed coldly through Jules's heart, as he entered into the presence of his Father.

"I have sent for you, Jules, previous to my making the last arrangements relative to my fortune; for I feel I'm sinking fast."

With pleasure the youth heard this; but he dissembled, and uttered an insincere hope that the Baron might be mistaken.

"Not so, I am fully aware of my situation, and prepared to meet my end." Jules affected to sob. "At the prayer of my excellent friend, I have again consented to receive you and constitute you my heir." (His son felt an almost irrepressible feeling of delight.) But I must annex certain conditions. (Young Fleurville's

countenance underwent a sudden change.)  
“You must marry your cousin, the girl whom you so basely seduced.”

Jules could hardly contain himself. Already he despised and loathed the frailty, he himself had caused. The victim of his crime was to him a subject of abhorrence; and he could scarcely smother his feelings of annoyance, when thus he heard a plan proposed, which was contrary to his every desire and wish.

Jules however knew his Father well. He knew how resolute he was; and he read plainly, in his emaciated and stern countenance, that if he refused, he lost all chance of inheriting the property, he so coveted; he therefore, after a minutes struggle, boldly, and seemingly with cordiality, accepted the offer of his parent; delighted, as he assured the dying man, to do justice to one, whom *untoward circumstances* had caused him thus to wrong. At the same time, however, he urged his parent not to press the match, until a twelvemonth should have

elapsed from the date of his first wife's death. This appeared but reasonable; and the deceived Father blessed the seeming repentance of his future heir.

To the delighted ears of Jules, were now revealed the various details ; the several sums in money, and large properties in land , about to descend to him ; and he learnt, with undisguised delight , the certainty of his soon becoming one the richest Seigneurs of the "Canton de Genève."

Over, and over again , did the Baron point out to him how much he stood indebted to the worthy pastor ; through whose instrumentality alone, he had thus again become the sharer of his Father's heart. As often did the youth affect a gratitude, which strange to say, he could not feel. From his soul, he detested the Clergyman ; and each benefit, that he received at his hands, only increased that feeling towards him , who had brought about the present reconciliation. With what joy then , did he learn that the Curate was soon again to return

to Berne, to rejoin his flock, and convey to the ears of the poor girl whom we have mentioned, the welcome intelligence of Jules's assent to marry her; and thus again to place her in the station, from which she had fallen, through the wily artifices of the young Roué!

In due course, the travelling cabriolet of the protestant minister drove up. With tears of real sorrow, he bid adieu to his old friend, the Baron, whom he still hoped to see once more in life; as Jules had faithfully promised to write to him, and summon him, should the aged noble get worse; and while the elder de Fleurville felt the most poignant grief at parting with his old friend; a feeling only equalled by the delight of his son in thus seeing the great bar to his immorality removed; the worthy pastor travelled towards his home, his Christian flock.

Three days had elapsed, since the departure of Armande. The Baron had strictly kept his room. Jules had already formed connexions

in Geneva, when returning late one afternoon, he was summoned to the presence of his parent. It was not now, however, to the study, but to the dying bed, of the author of his being, that the confirmed Roué was conducted. As the door opened, and he felt convinced that he was about to witness the death of his Father, the reckless young man *almost* felt a pang of self upbraiding for the conduct, which had thus (he was aware), hurried his father to the grave. Another flash of thought, and he remembered, that in the next hour, he would probably be the unchecked master of a noble fortune. The blush of conscious guilt was blotted out, and the cloak of hypocrisy was required, to sooth the countenance of one, whose pulses beat with hope, to see his parent's latest sigh soon waft towards realms of dark eternity.

In this mood, he advanced towards the bed. The setting sun now shed its latest ray upon the pale and emaciated countenance of the Baron, whose slow coming respiration, and closed eye, already bespoke the near approach

of dissolution. The youth seized one of the shrunken hands, extended on the bed, and kissing it with affected fervour, sank on his knee beside the dying couch of the old man. For a moment, no emotion was visible in his frame, and from his unaltered posture and the already deathly clamminess of that hand, Jules thought that his Father was a corpse. Ere another minute, however, the Baron slowly opened his eyes, and beckoning his son to bend over him, he with difficulty uttered, "I am dying! promise me then, to do your Cousin justice?" Jules hesitated not to make the most solemn assurances of his acquiescence. The fast declining noble almost smiled, and seemed, for a moment, from his upturned eye, and moving lips, to offer up his thanks to Heaven. Then slowly pointing to a cabinet, in the corner, he added. "The Will is there : bless you! may —" He pressed his hand, and as that hand unclasped, the soul of the Baron was far beyond the reach of mortal care.

Jules rushed from the room —The regular



functionaries went through their usual routine of duty, with all the carelessness which habit gives. They closed his eyes. They stretched his limbs, and smoothed the pillow which now supported but a heap of dull, inanimate, and quick corrupting, clay. The candles were lit; the guardian of the corpse appointed, and every rite and custom regularly and properly gone through.

Twas nearly midnight, when the new Baron re-entered. What had been his thoughts, his employments, since he had lost his parent, none knew; but a calm and almost fierce melancholy was settled on his brow; as he slowly advanced, and waved for the attendants to quit the room. In solemn silence they did so, and left, as they supposed, the young man to the indulgence of his solitary grief, beside the corpse of him, whom once he called his Father.

Jules locked the door, and listened with attention to their receding footsteps. Then, approaching the bed, he carefully drew close the curtains, as if to shut out the sight of that

form, which now lay silent, cold, unconscious. Then, seizing one of the candles, and drawing from his pocket a bunch of keys, he hastily, and without turning his head, advanced to the cabinet, indicated by his Father; opened it, searched for an instant, and then drew forth a document marked as "*The last will and testament of the late Baron Auguste de Fleurville,*" and with trembling hands, tore it open, and read it.

Its contents were simple, divested of legal technicalities, he at once found its purport, which was, "that on the day of the marriage of his only son Jules, with his Cousin, Marie de Saint Val, he should become possessed of every property belonging to his Father, except, ten thousand francs, which as a memento of friendship, he left to his old friend Antoine Armande, and a like sum to be paid to the poor of his native town."

The Heir could no longer controul his passion. "What! am I to be thus compelled to wed a woman, who has lost her chastity? and would

again, perhaps, if tempted. Am I to pay ten thousand francs to one, who basely has advised this step? and yet another princely sum, to wretched paupers? No, — no! — the drivelling old man was in his dotage when he made such stipulations, — stipulations which I laugh at. Am I not heir? — *sole* heir? — Are not these wide possessions mine by right? the only bar, this priest-dictated document, which would shackle my fair freedom, and rob me of my just inheritance? The law is clear. An only son inherits, where no will exists. Why should a foolish paper then deprive me of my every hope? Thus,— thus, I spoil the plans of two old silly fanatics! ” And in another moment, the cabinet was carefully locked, and the paper thrust into the fire.

As the flames seized upon this last expression of the dead man's wishes, Jules could have sworn he heard a groan proceed from the corpse, which lay upon the bed. Half frenzied, alarmed, yet braving; trembling, fearing, yet

unbelieving; the new Baron rushed from the room, overcome, as the domestics supposed, by feelings of maddening grief. Of deep regret for his, still warm, parent.

## CHAPTER VI.

A fortnight had elapsed, the Baron had been interred with becoming pomp, mourning had been put on, the regular steps gone through on taking possession of the Estates by the young heir, every worldly ceremonial had been complied with, and Jules only awaited some tardy legal matters to be completed to start off for "sunny Italy," when he was startled from his dream of bliss, one morning, by the unwel-

come apparition of Armande's carriage, slowly rolling up the avenue. From it he saw the worthy pastor step, and apparently enquire for the health of his old friend ! The servant , who had opened the door, had evidently given him the melancholy intelligence of his demise ; and in the succeeding moment , he saw the old clergyman stagger, and fall, into the arms of his serving man, who now carefully supported his fainting burden to the room he had ever been in the habit of occupying. Jules rang the bell , ordered that every attention should be shown to his late Father's friend , and mounting his horse, quickly galloped towards Geneva, anxious to throw off his air of confusion, and determine on the line of conduct he should adopt, ere he met the enquiries of the man he had so basely wronged.

A few hours, and he returned ; his heart thoroughly steeled against any reproaches or entreaties which Armande might make. In the study, he found the pastor, whose swollen eyes bespoke the acuteness of that sorrow ,

which had burst forth on hearing of the death of his old companion. The struggle, however, seemed over; and in a voice of well subdued grief, he offered to Jules condolences at once sincere and honest. After a short lapse, he alluded to the strange fact of the late Baron dying intestate, stating his firm conviction that some error must exist. Some cabinet must still contain the hitherto undiscovered deed? Jules, however, denied the fact; and with an apparently candid mien, accompanied Armande in a second search, which they together made through the usual depositaries of the late Baron. The young heir laughing in his sleeve, at the futile attempts to discover a document, he well knew to be beyond the reach of man.

Once more they re-entered the study, and the Roué hoped the subject now might drop. In this he was disappointed. The Curate closed the door, and drawing his chair close to Jules, on whom he fixed his sternest gaze, he slowly spoke; "There *was* a Will, I

am *certain*. ” And he seemed as if he sought to scan the features of the youth for more explicit answer than mere words. But the young Baron quailed not as he carelessly replied, “ Indeed I cannot tell, all that I know is ; I never saw one.”

“ Then let me tell you that *I* did ! — I saw and witnessed a Will deposited safely in the cabinet we have just searched, from which it must have been feloniously extracted.”

The youth could scarcely repress an involuntary start, and he inwardly cursed the meddling old man, while, the better to conceal his feelings, he assumed an air of hurt pride, which the pastor seemed not however, to observe, as he proceeded ; “ That Will bequeathed to me ten thousand francs. A sum which I should not have taken, possessing, as I do, an ample competency to supply my trifling wants.” Jules bowed, and acknowledged the generosity of his offered sacrifice ; and the Clergyman proceeded, “ It further gave ten



thousand francs to the poor of Geneva. As their almoner, as the steward of this charitable bequest, I cannot give up their rights, and therefore hope, that though no legal power compels; your own good heart will suggest the propriety of fulfilling the last wish of your respected parent."

"What warrant have I, that his wish was thus?"

"The solemn assurance of one, who witnessed the deed now lost. In the presence of the Most High, I pledge myself to the fact."

Jules bowed coldly and steadily replied, "I cannot doubt you. But, as my means are limited; I must most positively decline to throw away, any part of an inheritance which I conceive barely sufficient to support my rank."

Antoine Armande now looked with sternest mien; and his naturally deep voice, sounded harshly in the ear of the profligate.

"One only question more. Are you ready to fulfil your promise to your Father? the

condition on which he left you his fortune ? A condition, stated in the abstracted document. Will you, I say, will you unite your fate, with that of her, whom you have seduced ? ”

“ My dear Sir, I must confess this conduct seems most strange, and tempts me in the strongest manner to protest against your (doubtless well meant, but very uncalled for) interference. To put, however, the question at once to rest, I beg to inform you, in the most unequivocal manner, that I have made up my mind, *never* to marry.”

“ You refuse then to marry her whom you have ruined ? Her, who for your sake, now feels the scorn of a cruel and unforgiving world. Where is the promise which you made to him ; now in Heaven ? Where that compunction which you lately felt ? In the name of Him, whose minister I am, I beseech you to reflect ere thus, you heedlessly lose your own soul, and wreck her happiness.. Comply with this one prayer of your deceased Father, and I will not only pledge myself never again to

intrude upon you, but I will pay the money to the poor, that he intended to have bequeathed."

"Pshaw! — silly dreams, — I've told you my resolve; (and I never break my word) no moralizing folly can ever shake *me*."

"One only way is left then," said Armande, as he arose, and approaching an opposite door, he opened it. "One only appeal can I now make." And he introduced into the room, Marie de Saint Val; the truly penitent victim of the present Baron de Fleurville. She was followed by two persons: one of whom Jules recognized as the village lawyer; the other the Clergyman of Gex. At first he stood confounded. He however recovered himself, and, bowing with affected levity, demanded "the meaning? — the cause? — of this honour?" as he sneeringly entitled, "the *honour* of this visit?"

Armande replied not; but, seizing the poor girl by the hand, he led her, shrinking, up to Jules, and demanded, for the last time,

whether he would marry the wretched woman, who now knelt sobbing at his feet?

The group were all, save Fleurville, melted into tears; while he, with look of ill suppressed passion, loudly replied, " Never! never! my will is fixed. So now I pray you leave me, and take hence this *wanton* from my presence! "

The poor girl fell, almost insensible, on the floor, while Jules rang hastily the bell, and desired his servants to see the party out. In the mean time however, the Clergyman had raised the penitent, and coolly advancing to the table, he thus spoke; " Since this is your conduct, since nothing can move you, learn in your turn, *your* sentence. Know, wicked profligate! that this house, and land, and all your late Father's wealth, belong to me. Mons Delaval, the advocate who stands yonder, possesses the Will made in my favour, long ere your return, which now holds good, and gives me full inheritance.

Jules started, nearly maddened at the blow;

and wildly exclaimed. "Not so! impossible! you *know* full well another Will has *since* been made. You said you *saw* it. How can you then claim?"

"Produce that Will then," coolly rejoined the Pastor,

"I cannot" cried de Fleurville, striking his forehead, and tearing his hair, "I *cannot*, — I *destroyed* it!"

"Destroyed it?"

"Yes, — yes — in a moment of folly; but what of that? I know your goodness, you will not take advantage of it? I'll give you your Legacy; nay, if you wish: I'll *double* it. I'll give the ten thousand francs to the poor, and marry my cousin. I'm sure you want no more; you would not ruin me?"

It was now the Pastor's turn. He drew himself up to his full height, and solemnly pronounced; "Tis too late now. Marie shall never wed so base a wretch. For myself, I will not benefit by, this, your infamous conduct, but I here in presence of all, take possession of the whole property left by the late

Baron de Fleurville, and will make it over, with the least possible delay to his next heir; Marie de Saint Val!! For you, degenerate boy! you still shall have a trifling competence. Let time and this severe lesson work a change in you. That once effected, come to me, and you shall never want a home; till then, begone! Nay tarry not. I've power to enforce it. Your presence shocks me.

Jules looked round. Not one commiserating glance was there. — He saw the Clergyman had come prepared with proof, and all the power of the law; he therefore cast one look of savage indignation on the group, uttered one deep curse on all around, and fled for ever from his late possessions.

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It appears that some litigious member of the legal profession advised this young man to try the validity of the Will produced by Mons Armande. The youth, in the hope of recovering, had eagerly snapped at the idea,

and the cause came before me for trial. The plaintiff, was of course, not only non-suited, but looked upon with horror by all in Court. What rendered the case more shocking was, that on leaving the hall, he was seized by order of the Emperor, suspected of having joined a dangerous body of conspirators (under the Marquis de B.—,) who had assembled amidst the fastnesses of the Jura mountains. Ere however, they had time, fully to explain to him, the peril in which he stood, he had drawn a pistol from his breast, and as the principal witness in the foregoing trial passed him, on his way to leave the Court; the brains of the ill-starred and unprincipled youth stained the clerical dress of him, who had so strenuously tried to reclaim him. Leaving another example of the never failing misery, which is ever the result, of profligacy, and irreligion. —

## THE AFFIANCED.

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Naples.

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One of the most heart-rending trials, over which it was my fate ever to preside, was that of a Neapolitan Nobleman. He was of a tall commanding figure. His step was dignified, and his hair perfectly white. On entering the court a general murmur of ill suppressed commiseration was heard on all sides. Unaware of any of the circumstances of the case (as is the etiquette, lest previous bias should influence the decision of the Bench) I could not help feeling the most lively surprise at thus seeing the dignified old man ; for spite of his erect and firm carriage, the Prisoner was evidently a man of seventy ; step into the box allotted for the trial of criminals. On turning to my directions, I found his case noted thus.

"Giovanni de Martini, Marchese di Montifiore, accused of the murder of his only son, the Comte Enrico Zampieri." I looked up ; could it be possible, that under such a noble exterior, an assassin's pulses beat ; again I looked, and I beheld, with unfeigned horror, that never-tranquil eye, which tells of lunacy in its most dreadful form. I would willingly have retired ; but compelled by my duty to preside, I learned from evidence the following details which, I will in substance give, divested as far as possible, of legal technicalities.







# THE AFFIANCED.

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## CHAPTER I.

In one of the most romantic parts of the Abbruzzi, is situated the Castel di Montifiore. The traveller of the present day views with surprise an edifice so magnificent, so well adapted to resist the hand of time, already falling into ruins, neglected and deserted, uninhabited (save a few rooms which now serve as a

bad resting place to the weary voyager) this once splendid château presents an object of admiration and curiosity to the visitor of the Abbruzzi, who can scarcely be brought to believe that sorrow and superstition should have thus left unprotected to the unsparing hand of weather, a building which, within the last thirty years, is known to have been, the boast, the pride, of southern Italy.

To account for its present appearance, it will be necessary to recur to the autumn of 1809; when, on a sunny evening some half an hour before night (for in these parts twilight is unknown) a merry group of peasants were assembled on the green sward in front of the castle, dressed in their very best attire, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Comte Enrico de Zampieri, the only son of the Marquis di Montifiore their noble and well loved Lord.

It is true the Marchese was a haughty, an unbending Chief. He spurned, with all the high disdain of conscious rank, the thickly spreading heresy, as he was wont to call the term, Equa-

lity. Descended from the Roman Cæsars, he could not brook the freedom of the present fashion, which laughed at age and title, if that title was not won by deeds of arms. But if these qualities in some degree checked the love his Tenants bore him, a thousand virtues endeared him to them. Justice the most strict and impartial, kindness to the old, assistance to the infirm, protection to the weak, were ever readily accorded by the noble possessor of the Castle of Montifiore, who, at the period I speak of, held the appointment of Local Judge in the province (or as it is oftener styled, the kingdom) of the Abbruzzi.

The Peasantry, as I before said, loved and revered the Marquis; but that love was chequered by restraint and fear. Not so the almost adoration which they felt towards him, who might momentarily be expected; brought up amongst them; the sharer of their sports, the ever ready mediator with his father, the companion of their childhood; Count Enrico di Zampieri might, not inaptly, be styled the idol

of his people. Some four years, previous to the time I speak of, he had suddenly quitted his paternal roof and joined a Regiment of French Lancers. In the wars of Austria, he had signally distinguished himself, and received, on the Field of Battle, the Cross of the Legion; an honour, (in those times), well worth the coveting. His fortune, rank, and manners, had dazzled the heart and won the advances of many an illustrious Frenchwoman; untouched however, alike in War and Love, he now hastened back to the scenes of his infancy and happiness.

To celebrate his arrival, a banquet had been prepared, to which his tenantry were bidden; the old, the young, the healthy, and infirm, all flocked to taste their masters cheer; and bid an honest welcome to their future Lord. This group were now assembled on the grassy platform, which formed an almost english lawn, between the heavy avenue of oak and the principal entrance to the splendid mansion, within whose walls the every hope of Enrico now re-

sided ; the cause at once of his abrupt departure, and his long delayed return. Agnese de Fiorinza was the daughter of a Sicilian nobleman, whose wife expired in giving birth to this their only child. Endowed with almost Princely, wealth, he had brought up his infant in a style befitting her high rank and expectations, fondly hoping on some future day to see her mated with one worthy of her. Scarcely however, had she attained her fourteenth year, when death deprived her, of her surviving parent. He left her to the guardianship of his oldest and best tried friend, the Marchese di Montifiore, under whose immediate care the wealthy heiress had resided since her father's death, a period of seven years; for Agnese di Fiorinza, at the opening of this tale, had barely passed her twenty first birthday; an epoch, which had been to her the date of every dawning hope; the limit of Enrico's banishment.

To her alone he owed that exile. Brought up for years together, Enrico had allowed the soft and unobtrusive charms of the fair Sicilian

to win a heart, which she, who watched its daily throbbings, well could estimate. Untaught in all the false, and oft deceiving glare, which dazzles and subverts the pure affection of that heart which mingles in the world, they loved with all the deep devotion of a first, and lasting passion.

Perceived, at length, by him who was at once a Guardian and a Father; awaking suddenly from a long and delightful dream, they lived to hear the edict of the Marquis, which for a time drove forth an only son from his paternal home. The Marquis felt his first, his only wish, thus fully accomplished; and he prayed to heaven, on some future day, to see his Heir wedded to the daughter of his oldest friend. But still he refused to sanction, until she became of age, a passion which might seem to the world as based on mercenary motives. He therefore banished Enrico from his home until the fair Ward should have passed her twenty first birth day. At that period, should Agnese still adore the youthful Count (who only exceeded her in age by some four or five summers)

the Marquis promised his consent and blessing. Agnese felt her vow of constancy was still intact, and knew her love was well and warm returned, as throbbingly she threw herself into the arms of him, who now with ardour pressed her to his beating, his delighted breast.

Within the castle might also be found another member of the family ; a German, whose mother was related, by no very distant tie, to the noble Marquis di Montifiore. Brought up in all the mysteries of a German College, nursed in the ardour and superstition of a Northern clime, possessing rank and fortune, Gulio Moreno was wont to give full scope to all his feelings, a free indulgence to his high wrought passions. Could he behold the lovely Ward and feel indifferent? — No. — He saw, he felt her charms ; unconscious of rivalry, unaware of the foregoing facts, he loved with deep devotion, and hoped, when he should declare that love, to find a warm return.

Thus stood matters in the Castle, when the



banquet given in honour of the Count's return, took place, the period when this tale commences ; a tale , at once of Love , of Pride, of deep, and lasting, Misery.

“ To the Health of the Count Enrico!” cried the Marquis, as every person , present rose ; while their joyous cheer bespoke how popular was that toast.

“To the Health of the Count Enrico,” reiterated the Chamberlain, who presided at the lower table , while every bumper emptied , their noble Entertainer added ; “ Nor let our glasses ere be sullied by a meaner name.” Respondent to his word , each goblet was dashed upon the marble floor, in one loud crash. The Marquis smiled to see the love his tenants bore towards him, who was to be their future lord ; a tear of joy bespoke the feelings of Agnese. But however enviable might be the feelings of a father thus to see a son beloved ; however general the joy which greeted his return ; there was one , who joined not in the sentiment, who sat abstracted ,

and ever and anon , as looks of kindly meaning passed between the Count and Agnese , inwardly cursed the fate which thus pourtrayed, the idol that he worshipped, as a heartless coquette. How else could Gulio interpret it ? evidently that heart which once he thought his own , now warm responded to the unchecked looks of admiration, with which Enrico constantly greeted the fair Ward. The banquet still continued ; all was mirth ; yet Gulio could not bring himself to join in any of the good wishes , openly expressed in favour of the heir di Montifiore. As is usual on such occasions, several tables, each adapted to the peculiar rank of its occupants, filled the Hall. At that of the Marquis, were seated the noble Entertainer, his son, Agnese , the Confessor, and Gulio Moreno. Unfortunately for the latter, the seats had been so arranged that, although he could see , and mark their loving interchange of look, yet, not a word could Gulio utter to her whose every gesture carefully he marked. Miserable he sat, nor

could the raillery of the Marquis, the occasional observations of Agnese, or the long stories of the Holy father draw him from his abstraction. To the first, he merely smiled; to the second, he petulantly answered; while to the latter, he most unceremoniously turned a deaf ear. In vain did an "Orrechiente," (or melodist by nature), start up; and as if inspired, strike his jingling mandoline, to verses, which he, as an improvisatore, had composed upon the spot in honor of the new arrival. In vain had several peasants danced a merry round in gratulation to the Count. He sat absorbed in deep suppressed, yet burning, anger, until a sudden lull allowed him most distinctly to hear the fair Ward use terms of love, so strong, to Count Enrico, that frantic with rage, unable longer to controul his emotion, the young German hastily left the table, and whispering a word to his Page, quickly quitted the room, leaving the party amazed, yet fearing that some sudden illness had thus caused his singular and abrupt departure. A

moments pause, and the boy approached Enrico's chair, who instantly rising, and apologising for his temporary absence, followed the Page out of the banquetting hall.

In the dark vestibule lit by a single lamp, Zampieri found his relative, pacing with frantic gestures, like the caged lion up and down the marble floor, which sounded loudly, as he ever and anon would stop and stamp with direst rage. He scarcely perceived the entrance of Enrico, till roused by the latter, who addressed him, begging to know the cause which had thus urgently summoned him from the revel. Moreno stopped, and eyeing him with looks of bitter scorn, demanded how he had *dared* to speak in terms of love to Agnese di Fiorinza. The young Count unused to brook such language, yet disinclined to quarrel under his father's roof, fancying that wine had touched the German's brain, strove to avoid the consequences. "You surely jest; my father's guest, I am sure, would not speak thus in serious mood; or wine may perhaps, have lent

its fires to blind his better judgement. 'To-morrow we'll discuss the question.'

"Not so"—interrupted the infuriated youth. "Not so—this day, this hour, shall you answer me."

"Nay" answered Enrico, still determined to forbear, yet feeling it a difficult task, "if such is your mood, I'll leave you till we meet again, beneath some other roof," and he turned to leave the vestibule.

"It is then, as I thought," thundered Gulio, barring his passage, "you are a *coward*!" and he made a menace as if to strike the Count.

Patience could no longer hold her reign, another instant, and their swords were crossed, while the Page, an unobserved witness of the quarrel, rushed back with loudest screams, to call in friends to separate them. Nor had they scarcely time to exchange a single pass, when the wide doors were thrown open, and followed by a crowd of retainers, bearing lights, Agnese rushed in between them. Clinging

hysterically to Enrico, she soon perceived he was unhurt, and throwing herself into his arms, she burst into a flood of tears.

“Are you not shamed to shew a passion thus, to one so recently arrived, so little known to you?” tauntingly demanded Gulio.

“Shamed! No,” exclaimed Agnese, quitting his arms, and drawing herself up with dignity, “proud am I to declare, Enrico di Zampieri, my *Loved! Betrothed!!*”

“Betrothed? then I am lost!” and throwing down the weapon, which he lately grasped, the Baron rushed from the presence of the almost electrified group.

## CHAPTER II.

The explanation given in the last chapter, had been communicated to Gulio. From it, he learned, how futile had been his dream of passion, how wrong his conduct towards Enrico; heartbroken and abashed, he had sought his relative; and while his bosom heaved with sighs of disappointed love, he made apology most ample, for having thus allowed an almost maddening shock to have so robbed him of all

proper courtesy. Zampieri, filled with joy himself, could scarce refuse to pity and forgive, his unsuccessful rival. Closely clasping the proffered palm of his Father's guest, he hesitated not to vow eternal and unalterable friendship. Not so the Marquis, he felt indignant that his son should thus have drawn his sword upon one, around whom, the halo of hospitality should have shed its brightest rays, nor could he be prevailed upon to see his son, who (as the old Noble thought) had cast a stigma on the high bred race from whom he sprang. Agnese, too, felt agitated. She would not, could not, be brought to believe the reconciliation, thus effected, was sincere. A word, a look, might re-kindle the fire thus hastily quenched; and feelings hardly smothered, might burst forth again, with fresh and sudden violence.

Secretly she prayed, within her oratory, that Gulio's departure, which was fixed for the third day after the Counts return, might arrive, and pass over, in calm and safety.



Thus stood matters on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1809, the eve of Moreno's quitting the Abbruzzi, perhaps for ever. The meridian heat of the sun had passed away; and the lengthening shadows of the trees and mountains, and the cooling breeze, which now fanned the face of the lovely Ward, told of that evening hour of balmy rest, which only can be found in Italy. She sat before an open window, which overlooked the tranquil Pescara. Beside her stood, at once, her love, her pride, the idol of her earthly worship. The hand, which lately touched the spanish Guitar, was now enclosed in his. Those eyes so blue, so clear, now fixed on him, were filled with tears of joy; but yet, I may not say, of pleasure; for they could scarcely turn away, fearing to lose a single look of him; dreading to awaken from their dream of love. Gently her head had sunk upon his shoulder, and Enrico almost felt a wish that earth and all, might in that moment end; that he might never quit a position so enviable, so blissful; clasping within his

arms his every hope and wish ; his fondly adored Agnese. As they thus sat, in truly womanly caprice, she chided him ; although she never thought him wrong ; she still reproached him with the excess of a love, she proudly coveted ; nor would have changed, or even abated, for a host of worlds.

“ You should not thus give way to passion. Your father still is angered. Why then give room even to him to say you are wrong ? I like it not, Enrico, indeed I do not. Nor do I feel quite happy on the subject : ” and the fair Ward pouted with a winning archness.

“ Nay by my souls best hope I could not help it. The love I bear thee sweetest, urged me on ; the adoration that I feel, fast growing as the eastern storm ; that love which none e’er equalled. By this token do I swear, to it, alone I owe my fault,” and he imprinted on the cheek of Agnese, a warm, an agitated kiss, who starting up, and flying from him in all the natural coquetry which rules in womans breast, alike within the fastnesses of the Abbruzzi, as in the

polished court, she thus exclaimed, " How different is woman's love, to man's intemperate passion!! " and snatching up her Guitar, she sang the following lines in tones almost seraphic.

Straight from the heart , the soothing balm  
O'er ev'ry sense now stealing ,  
Each angry passion seems to calm ,  
And hallows every feeling.  
Joyful , I court it's sunny rest ,  
And nestle close the Dove ,  
Which bears the Olive to my breast ,  
And sways a woman's love.

Love to a man is merely sport ,  
The pastime of an hour ,  
His heart by wit , or beauty caught ,  
Succumbs to Cupid's power.  
But woman knows no changing strife ;  
Fixed , as the skies above ,  
She quits the feeling , but with life ;  
For Life... is Woman's Love !

" Nay, you wrong our sex. 'Tis only to the fickle maid, who wins our smiles, to wreck our future happiness, that we thus can act," exclaimed Enrico, as Agnese concluded. " Oh, could

you read my heart you would not thus believe in man's inconstancy. " As he thus reproached her, he had seized her hand, and nothing loth, the fair Italian had allowed him to draw her near him, till she could feel the very fanning of his breath, and mark the throbbings of a heart, which only beat for her; when the abrupt entrance of the head Guardia di Caccia, at once recalled them to a cold respect. The man but bowed, and seemingly unconscious of his mistimed presence, informed the Count; that Gulio Moreno was already armed and waited his arrival. Agnese shrieked, and rushing towards her lover, anxiously demanded an explanation.

"Nay, dearest Girl, be not thus easily moved. Giuseppe here will tell you that this morning several deer have been perceived on yonder crags. My kinsman and myself, would fain o'ertake them. He boasts of German modes of sport, and I feel anxious that he should not quit these parts, believing us to be unapt in manly exercises."

“ Nay, nay, you would deceive me ? ”

“ By Heavens, I would not, ” impetuously rejoined Enrico; but if it gives you pain, I’ll give up the recreation, although I fear it will offend, and seem a slight to friendship. I rather would however, thus appear uncourteous, than give you uneasiness. ”

“ Not so, twas but a womans foolish fears that urged me to dissuade you. Go, my beloved; but remember, let no foolish word, or trifling difference, provoke a quarrel. Your father still is sore incensed. The world would judge you harshly. Armed; in a moment, consequences, dreadful to think upon, might ensue. I feel a strange, a terrible foreboding. ” On looking up with tender solicitude, Agnese saw Enrico’s brow was furrowed with a ray of care, and she rejoined, “ Nay, dear Enrico, I was wrong. Twas but my anxious love, which thus gave terrors to thy departure. Go, but remember, that my constant prayer shall hover round thee, and for her sake, who thus loves thee, be careful, be cautious. ” Zampieri almost de-

terminated not to go; and was about to speak. The fair Ward, however, ere he could reply, was gone. With a lowly uttered benediction, he turned towards Giuseppe; and the next hour, found him with his relative far from his father's Castle.

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"Nay, you know not, kinsman, how severe are storms, in these parts, or you would at once hearken to my advice, and seek the castle, with instant speed," urged Enrico to his cousin. "In less than half an hour it will burst over us."

"What! and relinquish our sport, without a single trophy of success? In spite of rain and tempest, I'll yet bear back some token that I am no bungler. But I forgot", sighingly added Gulio, and his voice was at once lowered. "You have, indeed temptation to turn back, once more to greet, the smile that hangs on thy return; while I the sport of fortune, the mark for every shaft of care. — But why do I thus —"

try to damp thy happiness, by an unpleasant recital? Why thrust on the happy son and lover, the woes of the orphan, the rejected suitor? Enough; see you on yonder crag, some living animal? — it is a Deer, but much I fear beyond our reach. ”

“ Nought but a rifle ball could strike it down , it is at least two hundred yards off. ”

“ You think the shot for fowling piece, impossible ? ”

“ I do. ” —

“ My chesnut horse against your English gun I hit it ? ”


“ Well as you seem determined ; Done. ”

During this conversation , Gulio had coolly drawn a charge of shot , intended only for birds , and placed within his gun a ball. Ere Enrico's last word was well uttered, he had taken a steady aim , and in the next moment , the body of the deer bounded from crag to crag, till it rested on a peak of rock some thirty yards above their heads. Enrico almost could have believed that Caspar (whose

history has since been dramatised). now stood before him.

“ So fine a shot I never saw ; nor could I have believed it possible. It is indeed a feat well worth recounting. On our arrival at the castle we'll drink your health, and skill, in our first bumper, Gulio ; so let us haste and do you honor, ere the rain descends.”

“ What ! and leave my prize, the warranty of my truth behind ? I would not fail to carry back that deer, for half my fortune. It is close at hand ; I'll quickly fetch it, and o'ertake you.”

“ Not so,” said Enrico, and calling a peasant who at this moment passed, he urged Moreno to let him ascend, and bear the Antlers to the castle, while they speedily retraced their steps ; to satisfy his cousin, the Baron called the Boor, and pulling out his purse, offered him a considerable sum  go and bring the desired trophies to the castle di Montifiore. The man, however, pleaded a broken leg as an excuse for non-compliance ; urging, under



such circumstances, the impossibility of climbing up a steep, dangerous even to the most sure footed clamberer, and he passed on. Enrico would have again pressed, but Gulio laughingly turned round and added, "I have surprised you *once* to-day; I will *again* do so. Go, my good cousin," and seek the château, with your utmost speed. I'll bet my Chesnut horse, *again*, against your English dog, that, spite of all your haste, I'll reach it first; and in my hands, the head of yonder deer. So to the task, unless you'd make me think you, sluggish as a Roman." Without pause the German commenced his ascent, leaving Enrico the only alternative, that of returning with the utmost celerity to avoid the storm, which even now began to sigh and howl amid the stunted pines, which clad the surrounding mountains.



The storm which now raged shook the very foundations of the Château. Night had suddenly thrown her veil around, as if to give

more vivid effect to the forked lightning, which already ( to the great dismay of the superstitious menials ) had stricken, and in an instant destroyed, an oak which stood some fifty paces from the principal entrance of the castle, where it had flourished upwards of a Century, defying time and tempest. To this oak several legends were attached, involving, as it were, in the fate of this tree, the fortunes of the Montifiore family, which by a strange coincidence appeared to flourish or decay with the same prosperity or blight, as that which visited the forest King. The thunder, pealing loudly, almost drowned the clamour raised by this accident, amongst the alarmed servants, who crowded together in the hall. The rain fell in constant torrents, while the Marquis felt the most poignant anxiety, which ever and anon tempted him to enquire whether his son and nephew had yet returned; at whose absence he was greatly uneasy, and for whose safety he felt, each instant, an increased alarm.

In the large gothic window of the banquetting hall, the scene of many a revel, (but now unlit, save by a single lamp) stood Agnese, holding on high, a sort of earthen cup, from which a flame arose so considerable, as to be seen at some distance. This light she continually waved up and down, hoping it might serve as a beacon to guide the steps of her Enrico, towards his fathers mansion. Beside her stood Anina, her serving woman; attached from childhood to the fair Ward who was at once her mistress and her foster sister; whose life she would have willingly saved, even at the hazard of her own; and to please whom alone, she thus had dared to approach a casement through whose sashes, the angry lightning seemed to pour, forming as it reflected through the many coloured panes, a thousand objects of terror to the superstitious mind of an Italian peasant.

Unable longer to bear the light, Agnese threw herself on a rude chair, beseeching Anina to hold high the lamp, who though

nearly blinded by the continual flashes, still obeyed with affectionate alacrity the commands of her much loved mistress. At length, a joyful shout. Anina had beheld, during one of the most vivid of the heavenly illuminations, the Count Enrico ; and Agnese, with eyeballs nearly bursting, anxiously strove, amid the deep night, again to see the form she held so dear ; another flash, and her wishes were gratified. Apparently unhurt, she saw her betrothed. A happy and thankful exclamation escaped from her ; in the next moment, a sickening sensation affected her, an undefined, yet increasing dread of coming evil, overcame her, and she again sank into her chair, slowly uttering, but with melancholy force, " Heaven be praised, he's safe ! But why ? Ah, why *alone* ? "

Her hands, with which she had covered her face, were gently withdrawn, and she beheld, before her, her more than life, safe and uninjured ; in another moment, forgetting all her past anxieties she sank within his arms, and tears

of joy fell fast. With fond devotion he gazed upon her, he clasped her hand with feverish love, and parted the locks, which covered her brow of snow. In doing this, he naturally touched her garment, and that touch communicated a spot of blood. In a moment Agnese had started from him ; her life's warm current flowed back upon her heart, and in a voice of terror, amounting almost to a scream, she uttered, " Whence that stain ? " Enrico smiled, unable to understand her strong emotion, fancying it sprung from fear that he was hurt ; he laughingly replied, " Nay, dearest girl, 'tis but a scratch in climbing up the slippery rocks, to avoid the winding road. I've cut my wrist ; indeed it is no more ; behold ! " And he bared his wrist, which shewed a trifling wound. " It is not that, it is not that ! " cried the almost frantic Agnese ; " Say, say, I beseech you, where is your Cousin ? " and she looked sternly at him, as if to read his heart ; then violently casting herself upon her knees, and clinging to him, she beseechingly uttered, " Tell me ; tell me ;

for my heart is bursting?" He gently raised her, almost amused to see an uneasiness which could so easily be removed; he soothingly explained, "A foolish bet detains the Baron; ere this I feel convinced he is sorry for it; he wagered he would outstrip me. Doubtless caught and astonished by the violence of an Abbruzzan storm, he now seeks shelter in some mountain cave; for there are many in the path by which he passes. Come smile again. I swear this tale is true, and thus avouch it;" and he kissed the marble forehead of the lovely Ward, who by degrees, had listened and believed, and once again, within her lover's arms, already smiled at fears now happily passed. At this moment, the door was rudely thrown open, and Anina rushed in, (who during this scene had sought the Marquis's chamber to assure him of his sons return), with looks, so full of terror, as at once to call forth the most anxious enquiries from the Count and Agnese. For an instant she could not speak; recovering herself, however, she hurriedly pronounced "He's *murdered*."

“ Who? ” cried the tremblingly alive Agnese, “ Who? ” “ The Baron de Moreno ! ” The fair Italian heard no more; she fell insensible on the marble floor, to all appearance lifeless as he, whose death she just had learnt. Enrico stood amazed. In the next moment steps were heard, and the folding doors thrown open at the foot of the banquetting room, admitted four servitors, bearing on a couch the murdered body of Gulio, from whose temple flowed the still warm blood; while others bearing torches, and a host of Sbirri surrounded the bier of him, who thus had met an untimely end. Last walked the Marquis; but how changed! his pallor more affrightful and his eye more fixed, more glassy, than the corpse which lay before him. The melancholy procession entered, and in a voice, which seemed to come from the grave, the Marquis sternly uttered, “ Bar well the doors, let none stir hence; Officials! near approach.” The young Count shuddered; why, he could not tell; but rushing towards his father, uneasy thus to see him pale and seeming indisposed; shocked

at the fate of his friend, he would have seized his parent's hand, who sternly drawing back, repulsed him with a look of scorn. "What means this scene, my father?" "Call me not thus degenerate scion of a noble line. Call me not thus, THOU MURDERER!" At this title, Enrico seemed petrified; but though his tongue refused its office, his gestures seemed to seek an explanation, "You quitted this my roof with him, who now lies bleeding yonder, under fair semblance of friendship?" Zampieri bowed; "Produce the weapon?" A servant approached, bearing an english fowling piece, "Is this your gun?" again Enrico bowed "Then though my heart should burst, I still will do my duty. Know, unhappy boy, that beside yon corpse was found this instrument of death."—"Which I flung from me unloaded, as I clambered up the rocks, and meant to send a servitor to fetch," eagerly interrupted the youth. "Vile subterfuge!" loudly continued the Marquis; "see the recent marks of a discharge; add not falsehood to your crime. But I will speak no more; bear



him away! As Judge of the Abbruzzi, I commit you, Enrico di Zampieri, as your Kinsman's murderer." Agnese had started up, awakened to a terrible sense of the scene around her; she fell at the Marquis's feet, exclaiming, "No, no, it cannot be; recall, recall that word!" But it was too late; the severe trial to a father's feelings was over; and he, who had triumphed, like Brutus, over nature's sharpest pang; now sank insensible into his servant's arms, as Agnese clasped his tottering limbs, and officers of justice now quick conveyed Enrico from the hall.

### CHAPTER III.

There is a calmness in the view of the bay of Naples , on an autumnal day, unknown to any other spot. Seen from the windows of the Palazzo di Justizia, the glassy surface of the ocean , confined within the bold limit of the surrounding hills , reflecting in its bosom the towering Vesuvius, and the fantastic Castel del Uovo, the unchequered blue sky, and the green woodlands dotted with a thousand villas ;

the square rigged vessels, which repose as seeming fixtures ; the silent serenity of all around, unbroken save by the occasional splash of an oar, or the wild strain of a fishermans song ; may well tempt and delight the voyager, who for the first time feels the calming effects of silent nature beneath a Neapolitan sky. Such a scene now met the view of Agnese ; but it could not lull the throbbing pulses of her breast, or calm the agitation of her feelings ; for in the adjoining hall, a prisoner was being tried, whose life now hung upon the courts decision ; and breathless crowds had thronged the Tribunal to hear if Guilt or Innocence, should stamp the fate of Enrico di Zampieri.

Agnese, by great interest, had procured permission to remain in the anti-chamber, and she hushed her very breath, in vain endeavour, to catch each passing sound. From several persons, who had left the court, Agnese learnt, with heartfelt joy, how purely circumstantial was the evidence, how vague, in all its

proofs, the accusation brought against her lover. At length, a busy hum was heard the Court had broken up, for a few moments, to go through the customary consultation on its verdict. The king's Procurator (or public accuser) had himself confessed the charge was unsupported; and Anina flew from the presence of the judge to tell her anxious mistress of the news, the fair and honourable acquittal of her future husband, which in a moments space, would be pronounced in face of all the world. Agnese fell upon her knees, and though no prayer was uttered, no thanksgiving breathed, her heart too full for speech, yet those who beheld her upturned eyes, her hands so closely clasped, could well believe how warmly she felt gratitude to Him, who reads the heart and knows the inward thought of silent grief, the secret throbbings, of a pious soul. Tears, at length, came to the aid of Agnese, and she fell weeping, overcome, into the arms of her scarcely less agitated servant. A seeming dispute, between an ill

dressed peasant and the soldier who guarded the entrance to the Court, attracted for an instant her attention. Denied at first access, the countryman expostulated warmly. Convinced, at length, how strict were the instructions of the sentinel, he hastily placed a letter in his hands, addressed to the presiding Judge, desiring its immediate transmission. To the surprise of him who kept the door, an instant order for the Boor's admission, was received; and in another moment, a sudden call to silence and attention gave intimation to the fair Ward, that the court had again resumed its functions. Hastily starting up, she cried. "Go, my Anina, go and hear Zampieri's full acquittal; and tell him when concluded, that here I anxiously await his coming; once again, to see and press within these arms, my innocent and ill-used love. Go, and bid him not tarry to hear the gratulations of surrounding friends, but let him come at once to her, who loves him only better for this passing cloud," and as Anina again sought the hall of justice, she

sank into her chair unable to repress the wild, tumultuous, throbbings of her o'erjoyed heart.

How little could she read what passed within the Court; none could have believed it; all were astonished.—The Bench had again taken their seats, the Lawyers had ceased to talk, and pass those jokes, which legal men of all countries indulge in, during a temporary suspension of proceedings; even in presence of the trembling wretch, whose life or death depends almost upon a breath, and who feels with dread his fate suspended, while the worthy judge indulges in a sandwich and a glass of wine; the Counsel for defence, perhaps, uttering witty things to him, who plays the part of the accuser; such scenes, I say, were put an end to, by the re-entrance of the worthy functionary who presided, and solemn silence, once again, reigned in the hall of judgement.

During the pause I have spoken of, the friends of Enrico had flocked round him, and

congratulated him, on his approaching acquittal, at the same time, expressing their concern at the unpleasant detention he had undergone, and the unjust suspicions that had been attached to him. Proud of the universal interest thus displayed, conscious of his innocence, the Count bowed, and confidently awaited the verdict, which was again to give him to the world, free from all guilt, all taint. The king's Procurator rose, and all anticipated he was about to acknowledge that the case had failed. What then was their surprise, when he demanded that another testimony should be heard! Every eye was turned to the witness box, into which now entered the Peasant, who had so recently arrived. Permission given, he thus detailed: "An inhabitant of the Abbruzzi, overtaken by the same storm, during which the Baron had lost his life, he had sought the shelter of a deep fissure, or mountain cave, to avoid its fury. Unconscious at first, that any other soul was near, he was not a little surprised and terrified to hear, within a few

paces of him , the sound of human voices. Fearing that they proceeded from some of the dangerous Zingari, who had lately joined the standard of the redoubted bandit Cæsari, he had crouched down, and carefully watched them. From their dress, he discovered they were of gentle blood; and he was about to quit his hiding place and invite them to enter and share the shelter of the cavern, when a sudden word appeared to cause a no less sudden quarrel, and, in a moment more, the taller youth levelled his fowling piece ( he believed it to be the one now produced ) and in an instant killed his companion; then throwing down his gun, had fled in the direction of the Castel di Montifiore." An exclamation of horror and surprise burst from the indignant crowd. Zampieri had fallen on the seat allotted for him, and now covered his face with both hands. Could this be sign of guilt, or startled imagination? None could devine; but all breathlessly listened to the accuser, who now demanded, "Would you



again know the person of the assassin ? ”

“ I should.”

“ Do you recognise him in the Court ? ”

“ I do.”

“ Point him out ; ” and he handed him a thin , white wand. The witness evidently felt a reluctance to do so ; but summoning up his courage , while a slight tremour of his mouth bespoke his inward agitation, he slowly turned round, and confidently placing the indicator upon the head of Enrico, he slowly uttered “ There stands the murderer ! ! ”

The Procurator sat down ; unhappily, he had too well sustained the charge. The counsel for defence arose , hoping to elicit some discrepancy.

“ If this tale be true , why not come forward sooner ? ”

“ I feared the power of the prisoner’s family, living as I do , upon the Marquis’s estate. ”

“ Do no private motives urge you, thus to bear witness now ? ”

“ How could they ? I never saw the Count but

on the sad occasion; he will bear me witness, we are strangers."

Enrico, although he almost fancied that he had seen the face before, yet unable to recall it, was compelled to bow assent; and his defending lawyer sat down convinced that, those were right who thought his client guilty.

The ever changing mind of popular belief, already veered about, and pointed out the young Zampieri (who they lately hailed as innocent,) the murderer of his cousin; and they called loudly for judgement on the base assassin, as they now styled him.

In Naples, the Emperor had urged that noble criminals should receive no mercy. He hated and despised the mode in which, in former times, a title could buy off a guilty felon, and he encouraged the people to look for justice, equally impartial in its powers, as holding forth her terrors over the costly palace, as the humble cot, allowing none to stay her arm, however great or powerful.

The judge arose, and with emotion almost overpowering, pronounced the sentence of the law, condemning him to death within three days, holding out no hopes for mercy or forgiveness, save in Heaven. The Court broke up, and the condemned noble was led towards the antichamber, where (unconscious of the change which had taken place in the fate of him she loved so well), Agnese still sat overwhelmed by mingled emotions of hope and fear.

From this state she was aroused, by the sound of approaching footsteps. She started up, and rushed towards the entrance, to meet her every earthly joy. It was indeed Enrico; but not free and buoyant, as she hoped to greet him. Strictly guarded, the condemned youth now slowly entered. For a moment she refused the evidence of her senses. Her sudden look of horror and surprise, her searching glance, was met by a smile so sad, as at once to reveal the harrowing truth to the terror stricken girl, who started back unwilling

to believe her just surmise. " You might have spared her this, " in tone of deep reproach, said Enrico addressing Anina, who had followed him. Ere she could explain, Agnese had again recalled her scattered senses. " No, No, I dream; he is acquitted, and 'tis only fancy would delude. — Anina, " wildly added she, approaching her maid " Anina, tell me at once; is he not free from guilt? Is not Enrico once again in honor, and at liberty? But even now, you told me so; speak, and say again that I'm deceived by false appearance, and I'll bless thee." The poor girl turned from her mistress, unable to reply. Agnese addressed her lover. " Then to thee do I appeal? (though I hope thou art but some base counterfeit coined by anxious watching,) to *thee* do I appeal. Tell me at once. I feel my brain is bursting, a single word, or madness will ensue? tell me thy doom ere frenzy seize me? " and she cowered down before the form she loved. " Agnese dearest " said Enrico, in a soothing tone, " Agnese dearest " — his voice recalled her fleeting senses, and she fell

into his arms. "Fear not to hear the worst" She started from him, and gazed with straining eyeballs — "I die to-morrow!" A scream, at once unearthly and appalling, a scream of frantic agony, burst from her. Even the hardened Sbirri felt for her. "To-morrow? — Die? — impossible! — No, no, thou art innocent; I'll stake my soul upon it; but why do I loiter? I'll to the judges; I'll cast myself at their feet, nor ever move until they have pardoned thee. Yes, what shall keep me from their presence? what restrain me? No, thou shalt not — cannot die. If they seek blood, I'll give them mine. But hark, I must be quick or I shall be too late!" And with despairing force, Agnese fled towards the judgement hall, while Enrico, agitated and reviled, was led to the dungeons allotted to those about to surrender their lives in expiation, to the offended laws.

## CHAPTER IV.

To him, who treads the busy mazes of continual pleasure; to him, who rises in the morning for the purpose of following worldly pursuits; how short is time! It seems to fly with lightest wings, unheeded its hours fleet away. How different are the feelings of the captive! No chequered circumstance to mark its pauses, its distinctions. No ray of light to tell the happy

hours of day, from midnight darkness. No voice to cheer, no friend to solace ; each moment seems an age, an age of dull monotony ; grief ; even death, were preferable to an existence thus excluded from the busy intercourse with fellow man. In such situations have those, who held the world in scorn, been glad to tame the lizard, or even the frightful toad, to gain at least one look of recognition ; one breathing object, to link them with the living. Counting the minutes, as revolving years, the captive shut out from life, feels doubly the sharp pang of friends, who in this hour of need, unkindly shun him.

It was long past midnight, at five the prisoner was to suffer. The single lamp, which lit his dungeon, scarcely illuminated its murky walls ; yet none had sought him, and Enrico prayed for even earlier release from life ; since all, who loved, had left him ; since all he revered, seemed to consider him as guilty.

Enrico threw himself upon the straw, which

was scattered in the corner, and strove to forget, in sleep, the miseries of desertion and neglect. His prison door was opened quietly, but he turned not round, shunning even the glance of the goaler. He closed his eyes more firmly, as if he wished to shut out the world for ever. A soft voice pronounced his name. In an instant he had started up, and clasped Agnese (for it was indeed she, who had thus sought the condemned) to his beating heart, then throwing her gently from him, he seemed to recollect himself and half reproachfully enquired, "And can you thus embrace a murderer?" "A murderer?" vehemently exclaimed Agnese. "No if all the world thus called thee, if saints bore witness and my kindred vowed, I'd not believe thee base — impossible," and a look of triumph lit her speaking eye. "You think me guiltless then, Agnese?" "So help me Heaven, I do!" "Enough! enough!" cried Enrico, wildly clasping her to his almost bursting heart. "Come on, ye myrmidons of justice! bring forward racks and tortures! lead me to the



scaffold ! I will not sigh beneath your trials. *She* thinks me innocent ; *she* whom I adore beyond all worlds. To try her thus, and triumph, is worth a thousand deaths. *She* knows me stainless , and I mock your punishments. ” Exhausted with the effort Zampieri almost sank upon the stone floor. Again resuming in a tone more solemn, he continued ; “ Agnese, you have poured a balm into my soul, which will rob my approaching death of all its terrors. ” “ Nay talk not thus despondingly ; I come to save you. ” Zampieri looked incredulous. “ Tis true, most true. By force of bribes, for half an hour, I have removed all hinderance to your safe egress. Fly, therefore, my beloved ; and save thy precious life. ” Enrico looked almost angry at her “ What ! and thus leave my name to infamy ? my sudden flight construed into an admission of my guilt. Never ! ” and he turned away.

“ Tis but for a time, I feel convinced your innocence will one day become manifest, and that you will proudly then return, to claim this

hand which ne'er shall be anothers. Hesitate not; a carriage waits without to bear you hence."

"Agnese, your picture is tempting. Would that you had let me die without this pang. As it is, I cannot, will not, stir."

"And thus give up my hand rather than undergo a temporary suspicion," reproachfully asked the Ward.

"It cannot be, nay, urge me not. No power shall tempt me thus to sully our noble house, and bring the grey hairs of my loved father to the grave, believing that his child has fled guilty, and dishonoured. I know his proud nature well. In dying, he would curse his son, who could not prosper after. I am resolved, I will not shrink from my fate; but meet it in the hope that we, in better worlds, may some day, be united."

"You love me not, Enrico!"

"By Heaven I do!"

"Will you then throw away the chance of calling me thine own? will you refuse the offer

of this hand ? ” Enrico shook his head. “ One only way then , is now left. I will share thy flight. I will be thy companion , and at the first altar bind myself for ever to thee. Come then ! away ! ” And already his arm encircled her fair form , “ Away ! to liberty ! to love ! ”

“ May heaven and my father pardon me ; I can resist no longer. Yes , Agnese thou art mine , though at the price of honour ” and snatching one kiss from those lips he loved so well , now beaming with joy and triumph , he hastily led her towards the door , which flinging open he was about to enter on the passage , when the stern and chilly figure of the Marchese , pale as a spectre , met his agitated view. Agnese uttered a suppressed cry , and fell fainting in the arms of an attendant. Her guardian , now sternly waved for her to be removed , and motioning back his horror stricken son into his dungeon , followed without uttering a word , carefully closed the door , and sternly thus addressed Zampieri. “ Dege-

nerate boy ! was it for this I reared you ? Was it for this I loved you ? But why do I thus reproach a being, who by his ready acquiescence, would acknowledge guilt, and stamp with infamy his noble name." Enrico solemnly averred his perfect innocence and the Marchese continued ; " Nay such vows are futile, can I believe that one, thus guiltless, would attempt to fly, and bring dishonor on a gallant line of ancestors ? No it cannot be."

" By the high heaven above us — by my sainted mother and my ev'ry hope, I speak the truth."

A moment's pause, as if an inward struggle rent the Parent's heart, and he again spoke. " Feared you then to die ? "

" I am thy son " replied Zampieri, " let that speak for me. "

" Ah ! say you so ? Then I am right. The blood of the Montifiori cannot know the chill of fear. Your courage, boy, already pleads in favour of a pardon I can scarcely give for thy ignoble thought of flight." The Marquis

was now visibly agitated, as he added, "It was the fear of shame then, not of losing life; it was the loathing that you felt at being thus dragged forth to meet a felon's doom, in presence of a filthy mob; to hear their shouts, their execrations; to play the part of victim to a crowd, who well enjoy the sight of high patrician blood. Speak, Enrico, am I right?"

"Why thus pourtray the horrors of my doom?"

"To teach you how to shun it. How to wipe out the stain, thy supposed guilt has already stamped upon our house. How to earn the blessing of thy father," solemnly ejaculated the Marchese.

"Tell me, tell me" vehemently rejoined the Count, "and this moment will I do whatever you desire?"

"Come to my arms; thou art indeed again my son," and he folded Zampieri to his breast. Then slowly relaxing his embrace, he took out a small phial from his vest and gave it to

Enrico. His voice was that almost of a being of another world , while slowly thus he uttered. "That potion is a deadly poison. If in two hours you live , a public death is yours ; our name for ever coupled with the dishonour of a common scaffold. If you cheat justice, the last of our line will die , by his own , and not the executioners hand. Heaven who reads my heart, knows how I love you , how I feel for you ; but still I would not blush for you. Speak your decision ? " No agitation was visible in the countenance of the youth. His voice faltered not. He quailed not, as he replied , " I understand you ; and on one condition, I will do your will."

" Speak it ? "

" Grant me thy pardon, and thy blessing , and the potion's mine. Providence will surely pardon me a deed committed , but to save a father's fame , " and he sunk on one knee. The Marquis raised his hands over him. For a moment he seemed to adjure kind Heaven to receive his son ; then in a voice , almost

inarticulate from grief, he added " Bless thee ! Bless thee ! my loved , my worthy son ! The sacrifice complete , I'll join thee straight in Heaven , but hark ! they come ; they pant to spill thy blood. If I have done wrong , may I be pardoned , as I pardon thee ! " And with one close embrace he once more held his son : then , madly, rushed from the cell.

A moment's pause , the footsteps fast approached. " Nay I will cheat you yet. Father, you were right , may God receive my soul , and bless my Agnese and my parent ! " and as the door opened, Enrico drank to the dregs the phial he had received from the Marchese. Then turning to the guard, who already filled the cell , he sternly uttered , " Lead on ! I'm ready ; " and the procession quitted that cell , to which no prisoner ere returned with life.



## CHAPTER V.

There is a little hovel , standing some fifty paces from the public road , which leads from Naples to Rome , at a distance of about a quarter of a mile from the former city which , dignified by the appellation of l'Imperatore , was frequented during the invasion of the French , by all the leading Lazzaroni of the neighbourhood. There also, might be met the conductors of the vetturini , who travelled between La bella



Napoli and the eternal city; while more than one seeming peasant who nightly mingled in the motley group, was shrewdly supposed to know more of the neighbouring Banditti, than might exactly suit him to confess. Here would the strolling improvisatrice and the wandering traveller resort—here would the bright eyed vineyard girl drop in, and dance or sing, as best might suit the prevailing mood of the assembled company. At the moment I speak of, all was happiness beneath the roof of l'Imperatore. A couple of gallant Condottiere di Vetturino had led forth two pretty peasants and danced an awkward, yet enlivening round, to the music of a Mandoline, unremittingly played upon, by an old cottager from Poestum, who wielded his quill upon the gingling wires, with no small dexterity. In one corner, sat a party enjoying the rich trial of a game at cards; while in another an Abbruzzan peasant loudly called out, with all the energy which this truly Italian amusement gives, the numbers at

“ Il Giuoco di Moro ; ” occasionally squabbling, as is usual at this game, with his fortunate antagonist, one of the best boatmen of the bay of Naples. Two travellers greedily allowing strings of macaroni to slide down their hungry throats, and the stately landlord in proud consciousness of his own dignity ( self styled “ Il Maestro Carmagnola ” though the more frequent appellation of “ Beppo , ” bespoke an intimacy with some of his guests somewhat savouring of familiarity and equality ) made up the scene, which now served as a resting place to a party of Sbirri, on their way to attend at early day-light, the execution of the Count Enrico di Zampieri ; which it had been determined should take place, with every mark of solemn pomp, to make this shew of impartial justice more striking to the people. Already had the hour of eleven struck , the party appeared in no mood to separate. The dancers seemed to skip each moment lighter ; the drinkers seemed , each instant, to become more thirsty ; while the Moro players, evident-

ly became more animated. The hand almost thrust into the adversary's face ; the eyeball starting as if more quickly to catch the number of the outstretched finger, and the guess pronounced with stentorian lungs ; shewed how heartily this strange species of gambling was enjoyed by the parties engaged in it. The Gendarmes had gained an attentive auditory ; even the host lent a willing ear, while they recounted some of their deeds of prowess, and of cunning ; in fact, all was happiness and good fellowship among the motely circle thus collected.

At length fatigue became apparent. The dancers ceased. The Sbirri talked of continuing their march. The Mandoline player already slept, and all except the gamblers began to think of breaking up. A dispute had occurred between the peasant and the boatman, relative to the number displayed by the former. The whole vocabulary of Neapolitan abuse had been called into requisition ; the usual menaces, the usual gestures gone through, and as is customary, the

party having thus given vent to all their spleen, were again about to recommence the game in an amicable manner, when the boatman, leaning over, whispered a sentence to the Abbruzzan. One word alone was heard by those around, the word "Briganti." In another moment, the speaker fell, pierced to the heart. The seeming peasant had drawn his knife, and plunged it to the hilt in the breast of the infortunate man, who staggered back, and while the weapon still remained in the wound (for the Abbruzzan had not withdrawn it) raised himself and almost screamed, "Yes, I repeat it, he is the Lieutenant of Cæsari's gang, for whom two hundred ducats are offered. I know him well." A well intentioned friend had now advanced and carefully drawn forth the knife. As its ensanguined blade left his breast, the Neapolitan fell a corpse. In another instant, the police had seized the murderer, who stood calm, and unmoved, while another of the party began to con over and compare, the Government reward and personal description, with him who stood before

them. Each feature tallied, each suspicion was confirmed. The prisoner alone seemed free from agitation. At length he smiled and coolly spoke. "Spare yourself further pains; the Boor told truth, I am the man therein described, but what of that? I have a secret which will soon bring liberty and pardon; nay, honours, if I ask them!! But to do this, I must be speedy; lead me to your officer?" "I am the commander of the party," replied an old sergeant, whose grey moustachio's and Croix d'Honneur showed that he had not always been a civil soldier. "Say what you have to communicate?" "Not so; to your superiors, can I alone divulge my tale." "Then you may wait till morning," grumbled the old soldier. I will not budge an inch to night. Here, Joseph, let you and yon tall fellow carry the corpse up stairs, and see that no one touch it, till the commissary arrives; while Martin and myself will guard the prisoner. We've done a good nights work." — "Listen," said the prisoner "I call you all to witness; the life of the Count Enrico di Zampieri will be saved if I

see the Minister, within an hour; if not, the blame be on your heads." "If you speak true" said the Gendarme "I'd willingly embrace you. He was one of the bravest young officers in our division, and I'd give a finger to preserve him." The bandit called on all the saints to bear him witness that he spoke the truth. The Sbirri consulted for a few moments, and then announced their willingness to proceed. In another instant they were en route; and as the clock struck one, they reached the barrier. Here, for a while, they were detained, much to the annoyance of the prisoner; and a full hour had elapsed before they had arrived at the villa of the Minister, situated some half a league from the town. As if blind fortune had determined to thwart them, the proprietor was absent. A Court ball had detained him, and daylight had already shed her early rays, when the Lieutenant of Cæsari's band, stood in the presence of his Excellency, the Prince of Capri. Nought daunted by his appearance, the prisoner spoke boldly; first having secured the promise

of free pardon, should he succeed in saving the Count Zampieri's life.

“Twas I, that killed the Baron di Moreno; for such, I hear, was the victim's name. Aye start if you will, I have your promise of forgiveness, so I'll e'en be candid. I met him with this Count, who is condemned to die. He asked me to fetch a deer that he had killed, and in offering me reward, he showed a quantity of gold. I was however busy and declined. A storm ensued, and as I sheltered me beneath an arch of rock, the young Count passed alone; then speedily commenced his difficult ascent towards the castle di Montifiore. To do this, the more easily, he threw down his gun, which fell close by me; I snatched it up, and loaded it, determined to carry it back to our captain, who dearly loves an English fowling piece; and on my way, if possible to shoot a deer. I therefore quitted my position; as I emerged, I saw the Baron toilingly attempt to reach the crag where his game lay dead; the temptation was too strong; I coveted the gold that he had

shown me. The deer, too, seemed a prize well worth the having. So I quietly advanced and shot him. Nay, bend not your brows, great Prince, tis nothing when one's used to it. So as I said before I sent him to his last account, and was about to rifle him, when I saw retainers of the Marquis quickly advancing down the path. Fortunately they had not seen me; so leaving behind me the gun, which would have encumbered me, I quickly fled. Well, your Excellency, when I returned, what should Cæsari do, but fall into a passion; and swore that I had brought most likely the troops upon him; for if the young noble was acquitted, (we had heard all about his having been taken up) that the soldiers would scour the mountains night and day, till they found the murderer; so, to make his mind easy, and to settle the job for ever, I came down three days ago, and took them all in, with my evidence; as you well know. So now, your Excellency, you have only to save this Don; give me my pardon; and I think we are all quits?" and the bandit laughed. The



Minister had heard him with impatience ; now starting up, he speedily commanded that his fleetest horse should be saddled , “ Mount quickly, Antonio, mount and away to Naples ; stop the execution. — On your peril, stay not on the way, to breathe ; for life and death hang on thy speed. — For you, ruffian , others must decide your fate. Away to Naples ! every mounted man. I'll give a hundred ducats to him who first arrives and saves me from the crime of shedding innocent blood ” and the old man fell sobbing in his chair.

## CHAPTER VI.

The day appeared unwillingly to break. The dull thick veil of misty morning, still hung around the base of Vesuvius, from whose crater might be seen ascending, a close, dense smoke, accompanied by those occasional rumblings, which announce the early probability of an eruption. No boatman now skimmed the bay. The very fisherman, who prepared his net, did so in solemn silence; feeling (he

knew not wherefore ) a chilly consciousness of some coming evil. The drowsy sentinel , with surly aspect, watched the dew , which trickled down his musket barrel ; and every thing in nature seemed as if she felt that hour was unpropitious.

There is a square , situated some fifty paces from the Giardino Reale where criminals , at the time I speak of, were wont to meet their doom. This square was now lined with troops, dressed in all the gay trappings , which have won, and still shall win, the heart of many a Fair. The gorgeous plume, and shining blade, the well made coat, the gay embroidery, all was there ; and yet no brilliancy, no captivating lustre, could they shed upon a scene , where morbid feeling, and a fell anxiety to watch the last throes of life , prevailed. It is a remark , alike warranted in all countries , a remark unhappily too true , that the female is the predominating sex of those , who thus can find amusement in seeing a fellow creature die. Such an incitement had now drawn together the

crowd, who filled up the space between the soldiery and the surrounding buildings, at whose windows might also now be remarked even well dressed women, who had left their beds thus early, to attend this closing scene, this horror striking transit of a mortal soul. A low murmur was heard, as day light slowly revealed the fatal scaffold, which was to drink a Noble's blood. In compliment to the rank of the culprit, the usually rude guillotine had been covered with black, rendering the shining blade of this newly imported French punishment more prominent; more conspicuous to the assembled mob.

The assistant Executioner had taken his place. The soldiers had several times opened their ranks to allow processions of zealous monks (each band headed by a massive crucifix), to enter and surround the immediate vicinity of the scaffold. Busy officials strutted here and there. And now, alone was wanting, the great feature of the scene, the unhappy culprit, Enrico di Zampieri. Presently the noise of

an approaching vehicle was heard, and escorted by a party of mounted Gendarmerie, a carriage drove quickly into the square, from which descended the youth about to suffer, the officer in charge, the grave Confessor, and the Executioner, who (as is customary) had been to pray for, and receive, the pardon of him, whose life he was about to take. The prisoner was easily distinguishable; his noble carriage, and open, though melancholy countenance, his bare head, robbed of almost all its hair, his throat uncovered, his shirt collar turned down, the less to impede the progress of the fatal *knife*, at once bespoke him to the crowd; who savagely uttered a scarcely suppressed yell of demoniac triumph when they beheld the person of him, whom they firmly believed to be his cousin's murderer. And yet the unhappy youth quailed not. No blush of deep remorse, no shuddering tremblings, evinced a consciousness of guilt. His step was firm, as if the present hour was one of common moment; and when the groan, with which

the people greeted him, first struck his ear, he turned not round, with hardy insolence, to brave, as twere, the shame of crime; nor did he shrink, like one who feared his very countenance might betray him; but with a look of mild reproof, he glanced upon the people who came thus to gaze upon his last moments, and insult his dying hour. Many there were, however, round the "Place," who doubted such a mien could cover an assassins soul. Some, who in the breath before had joined in execration, now strove to calm and hush the rising sentiment of vengeance, which had thus indecently attacked a wretched creature, just about to suffer. While yet a few shed tears to see so promising a flower thus withered in the bud.

Enrico turned one look upon the scaffold. A slight paleness was visible to those who immediately encircled him; and beckoning to him, who was to superintend the execution, he begged a moment's respite; pleading fatigue, and a desire to collect his thoughts ere thus he rushed into the presence of his Maker.

The Commandant had known him long ; had felt his kindness ; and had seen his courage. How could he then account for this most strange request ? Tis true that malefactors often shrink from death, and strive to retard, even for a minute, the last pang, which takes them from this world. But, well he knew Enrico was not one of these ; and yet, what then could urge him thus to ask for this delay ? Such were the ideas of him, who readily conceded five minutes to the wretched prisoner ; much to the annoyance of the crowd, who had been waiting full an hour for the delicious sight of a patrician's blood. Enrico stepped again into the carriage, and throwing himself back, first uttered a last prayer for Agnese and his father ; then quietly awaited the working of the deadly draught, which seemed unwilling to effect the escape of Zampieri from the dreadful end to which he was condemned. A moment more, and the prisoner felt a shooting pang. It was the first symptom of its death dealing power, and Enrico blessed it ; still clinging to the hope that he might yet

avoid the executioner's hand. The official however, approached the door, and pointing out to him how much the people murmured at this short delay, requested him to descend. To this the Count (aware that a few minutes would serve to effect the desired object) strenuously demurred; and earnestly besought five minutes respite more. "Nay," cried the old officer, "it is impossible, nor can it answer any purpose. I see that you still cling to life, and look for a reprieve. Banish, I beseech you, this idea. I can most solemnly aver, that there is no foundation for a hope like this. But I will give you yet a moment more, for one last prayer; and then—" and the "*vieille moustache*" muttered the conclusion to himself, and turned away; gave some directions; and the better to conceal his good nature, pretended to be very busy, allowing ten minutes to elapse ere he again came to the side of the carriage. The door was opened. The prisoner, conscious that further delay was impossible, stepped out. But how changed within that brief period! pale



and convulsed, he was now, with difficulty supported, to the first step of the fatal platform. The general belief, that he was guilty, and feared to die; spread through all ranks. Sympathy no longer shed her influence for one, who thus seemed craven, and faint-hearted. The Confessor held the passive hand, which only closed on his, when some convulsion wrung Zampieri's frame. The executioner had examined and prepared the fatal knife. The monks already had commenced to chaunt the service of the dead, when a sudden shout, a cry at once of anxious, piercing thrill, paralysed the group; a man, on horseback, galloped into the circle, and standing in his stirrups, cried, "Stay the execution! He is innocent!! — stay the execution; by order of the Prince!" And the hasty order was repeated by a thousand tongues, as every citizen and soldier, pressed towards the guillotine. It was indeed in time; but only just in time. The prisoner now stood upon the last step, and another instant, and he had met a felon's doom. Anxious, his friends

closed round him, to congratulate him. At that moment, a convulsive spasm seized him, and he fell on the platform, surrounded by the commiserating faces of those, who but an instant past, had forced him with morbid eagerness, to a disgraceful death. Enquiries, lamentations, expressions of concern, and warmest demonstrations of friendship, were lavished on him; but in vain. The strongest men, of those who thus formed a circle round him, could scarcely hold him. Agonizing tortures made him writhe in strong convulsions, brought on (as they supposed who knew but little of the horrid truth) by the sudden revulsion which must have taken place in Enrico's feelings. At length the pains seemed to decrease, and the little Surgeon hastily sent for on the occasion, already prognosticated a speedy convalescence. A carriage had driven up and stopped beneath the scaffold; none had observed it; their every attention drawn to the state of Zampieri, till they were suddenly aroused by the voice of a female, her hair dishevelled, and her accent hysterical, who

passing all impediments, arrived within the circle, and throwing herself on her knees beside the youth, articulated in a voice of choking joy, "Thank Heaven he is saved!" That sound appeared to bring back life to Enrico. His eyes again opened. Twice he vainly attempted to address her. Already he faintly clasped her to his breast, then swallowing a single mouthful of the water they had brought him, he smiled, while energetically, and with a look of triumph, he with difficulty, uttered, "Agnese, my love, I die! But I am innocent! Bless you! bless you! my father too" — he would have added more; but falling back, nought now remained but the outward form of him, whose soul had sought its Maker.

Agnese knew not yet, how wholly she was bereft. Overcome with strong emotion, she had fallen back in happy insensibility. Another feature only now was wanting. A Father! a wretched Father! yes; he arrived in trembling haste; he gazed around and saw the work of his own hand! Loudly proclaimed

himself the murderer of his son! and pitying Heaven in that instant robbed him of his senses, to save the wretched parent from the pang of never dying remorse. The consciousness of having sacrificed the idol of his soul, to selfishness; to pride!!

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Such was the substance of the evidence; such was the gravamen of the charge now brought against him, who at this moment, stood on the same spot, where a few months before, his son had been placed; accused of the same crime; a crime, whose only punishment is death! — To inflict it, in the present case, would indeed have been a mercy; to cut off from existence the unhappy maniac, would have been to blot out, a life of sorrow. But could a Judge thus dare to condemn a lunatic; an irresponsible creature, to a public doom? No, I could not bring myself to do so; more especially as I was aware how acutely the noble and unhappy

father, who stood before me felt the disgrace, attending one, who dies upon the scaffold. In my life, I never felt so agitated, so undecided; to see, the old man's look of stern despair; his shudderings when the various articles of proof, were shown; his constantly pronounced sentence of. "Where is my son? O give me back my child!" were quite enough to draw tears even from the coldest eye. His consciousness of having done a something wrong; his self upbraidings; his anxious demands to see, again, that offspring, he had himself destroyed, left not a soul unmoved within the hall. — His crime, brought home on clear and damning evidence; the king's procurator, in a voice of strong emotion, rose, and demanded that the law should take its course? Only its passive instrument, I felt myself compelled to pronounce the prisoner's death. The old man seemed to understand in some degree that he was about to die, and with a smile rejoined — "Then I may go and see my son — Is it not so?" None answered; the Marquis paused a moment, and reproachfully

enquired, " Will none tell me where I may find my boy? my Enrico? " — I could bear no more; I rushed from the Court, and sought the solitude of my study. Here, my first act was to sign a reprieve, until the Emperor's pleasure should be known, and, to this ever gracious Sovereign, I enclosed a copy of the foregoing facts. — In far less time than I anticipated, I received from him an answer; in which my excellent master, was pleased to commend my conduct, and enclosing a free pardon, added in his own hand writing; " Had I been in the situation of the Marquis, I should have acted as he has done; I heartily pity and gladly pardon him. " Thus wrote Napoleon. He who has been so often and so basely, maligned; depicted by his enemies as vengeful and bloodthirsty. — His gift of mercy was soon proclaimed; the unhappy culprit was removed from the public prison to a château near Velletri, where under proper charge, I can positively say, he existed (the continual prey to melancholy madness), as late as 1829; and although nearly ninety years of age, free from

all bodily complaint, he yet pined on a miserable example of retribution and remorse. As to Agnese, she entered a convent of Carmelites, and I have every reason to believe, sank under her afflictions within two years of her lover's death; leaving behind her a character of pious resignation, and of deep devotion rarely equalled.

## AU LECTEUR.

The author feels it due to his reader to offer an apology for entitling this work "The Diary of a judge" whereas, as it now stands, it is a mere succession of Tales, which might just as well have been recounted by a non-judicial person. To account for this, it is necessary to state that the original M.S.S. was (as the title would denote) the supposed daily observations of a high legal functionary; but advised to plumb his depth with a single tome, ere he ventured to launch three volumes (the intended extent of the present work) on the stormy sea of literature; he found it necessary to cut down the judge notes, to lines; to omit all scenic descriptions and dissertations on the



passions ; and to reduce every part to the least possible compass, which will perhaps, together with the Author's acknowledgment of being a mere tyro in novel writing, plead in extenuation for an abruptness of style, and other faults, which an intelligent reader may find, and which it is hoped, a kind reader, will pardon.—

FINIS.

# TALES.

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BARBARA S—.

BY CHARLES LAMB.

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ON the noon of the 14th of November, 1743 or 4, I forget which it was, just as the clock had struck one, Barbara S—, with her accustomed punctuality, ascended the long rambling staircase, with awkward interposed landing-places, which led to the office, or rather a sort of box with a desk in it, whereat sat the then Treasurer of (what few of our readers may remember) the Old Bath Theatre. All over the island it was the custom, and remains so I believe to this day, for the players to receive their weekly stipend on the Saturday. It was not much that Barbara had to claim.

This little maid had just entered her eleventh year; but her important station at the theatre, as it seemed to her, with the benefits which she felt to accrue from her pious application of her small earnings, had given an air of womanhood to her steps and to her behaviour. You would have taken her to have been at least five years older.

Till latterly she had merely been employed in choruses, or where children were wanted to fill up the scene. But the manager, observing a diligence and adroitness in her above her age, had for some few months past intrusted to her the performance of whole parts. You may guess the self consequence of the promoted Barbara. She had already drawn tears in young Arthur; had rallied Richard with infantine petulance in the Duke of

York : and in her turn had rebuked that pétulance when she was Prince of Wales. She would have done the elder child in Morton's pathetic after-piece to the life ; but as yet the " Children in the Wood " was not.

Long after this little girl was grown an aged woman, I have seen some of these small parts, each making two or three pages at most, copied out in the rudest hand of the then prompter, who doubtless transcribed a little more carefully and fairly for the grown-up tragedy ladies of the establishment. But such as they were, blotted and scrawled, as for a child's use, she kept them all ; and in the zenith of her after-reputation it was a delightful sight to behold them bound up in costliest morocco, each single—each small part making a *book*—with fine clasps, gilt-splashed, etc. She had conscientiously kept them as they had been delivered to her ; not a blot had been effaced or tampered with. They were precious to her for their affecting remembrances. They were her principia, her rudiments ; the elementary atoms ; the little steps by which she pressed forward to perfection. " What," she would say, " could Indian rubber, or a pumice stone, have done for these darlings ? "

I am in no hurry to begin my story—indeed I have little or none to tell—so I will just mention an observation of hers connected with that interesting time.

Not long before she died I had been discoursing with her on the quantity of real present emotion which a great tragic performer experiences during acting. I ventured to think, that though in the first instance such players must have possessed the feelings which they so powerfully called up in others, yet by frequent repetition those feelings must become deadened in great measure, and the performer trust to the memory of past emotion, rather than express a present one. She indignantly repelled the notion, that with a truly great tragedian the operation, by which such effects were produced upon an audience, could ever degrade itself into what was purely mechanical. With much delicacy, avoiding to instance in her *self*-experience, she told me, that so long ago as when she used to play the part of the Little Son to Mrs. Porter's Isabella (I think it was), when that impressive actress has been bending over her in some heart-

rending colloquy, she has felt real hot tears come trickling from her, which (to use her powerful expression) have perfectly scalded her back.

I am not quite so sure that it was Mrs. Porter; but it was some great actress of that day. The name is indifferent; but the fact of the scalding tears I most distinctly remember.

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As I was about to say—at the desk of the then treasurer of the old Bath theatre—not Diamond's—presented herself the little Barbara S——.

The parents of Barbara had been in reputable circumstances. The father had practised, I believe, as an apothecary in the town. But his practice, from causes which I feel my own infirmity too sensibly that way to arraign—or perhaps from that pure infelicity which accompanies some people in their walk through life, and which it is impossible to lay at the door of imprudence—was now reduced to nothing. They were in fact in the very teeth of starvation, when the manager, who knew and respected them in better days, took the little Barbara into his company.

At the period I commenced with, her slender earnings were the sole support of the family, including two younger sisters. I must throw a veil over some mortifying circumstances. Enough to say, that her Saturday's pittance was the only chance of a Sunday's (generally their only) meal of meat.

One thing I will only mention, that in some child's part, where in her theatrical character she was to sup off a roast fowl (O joy to Barbara!) some comic actor, who was for the night caterer for this dainty—in the misguided humour of his part, threw over the dish such a quantity of salt (O grief and pain of heart to Barbara!) that when he crammed a portion of it into her mouth, she was obliged sputteringly to reject it; and what with shame of her ill-acted part, and pain of real appetite at missing such a dainty, her little heart sobbed almost to breaking, till a flood of tears, which the well-fed spectators were totally unable to comprehend, mercifully relieved her.

This was the little starved, meritorious maid, who stood before old Ravenscroft, the treasurer, for her Saturday's payment.

Ravenscroft was a man, I have heard many old theatrical people besides herself say, of all men least calculated for a treasurer. He had no head for accounts, paid away at random, kept scarce any books, and summing up at the week's end, if he found himself a pound or so deficient, blest himself that it was no worse.

Now Barbara's weekly stipend was a bare half guinea.—By mistake he popped into her hand a—whole one.

Barbara tripped away.

She was entirely unconscious at first of the mistake: God knows, Ravenscroft would never have discovered it.

But when she had got down to the first of those uncouth landing-places, she became sensible of an unusual weight of metal pressing her little hand.

Now mark the dilemma.

She was by nature a good child. From her parents and those about her she had imbibed no contrary influence. But then they had taught her nothing. Poor men's smoky cabins are not always porticoes of moral philosophy. This little maid had no instinct to evil, but then she might be said to have no fixed principle. She had heard honesty commended, but never dreamed of its application to herself. She thought of it as something which concerned grown-up people—men and women. She had never known temptation, or thought of preparing resistance against it.

Her first impulse was to go back to the old treasurer, and explain to him his blunder. He was already so confused with age, besides a natural want of punctuality, that she would have had some difficulty in making him understand it. She saw *that* in an instant. And then it was such a bit of money! and then the image of a larger allowance of butcher's meat on their table next day came across her, till her little eyes glistened, and her mouth moistened. But then Mr. Ravenscroft had always been so good-natured, had stood her friend behind the scenes, and even recommended her promotion to some of her little parts. But again the old man was reputed to be worth a world of money. He was supposed to have fifty pounds a year clear of the theatre. And then came staring upon her the figures of her

little stockingless and shoeless sisters. And when she looked at her own neat white cotton stockings, which her situation at the theatre had made it indispensable for her mother to provide for her, with hard straining and pinching from the family stock, and thought how glad she should be to cover their poor feet with the same—and how then they could accompany her to rehearsals, which they had hitherto been precluded from doing, by reason of their unfashionable attire,—in these thoughts she reached the second landing-place—the second, I mean from the top—for there was still another left to traverse.

Now, virtue support Barbara!

And that never-failing friend did step in—for at that moment a strength not her own, I have heard her say, was revealed to her—a reason above reasoning—and without her own agency, as it seemed (for she never felt her feet to move) she found herself transported back to the individual desk she had just quitted, and her hand in the old hand of Ravenscroft, who in silence took back the refunded treasure, and who had been sitting (good man) insensible to the lapse of minutes, which to her were anxious ages; and from that moment a deep peace fell upon her heart, and she knew the quality of honesty.

A year or two's unremitting application to her profession brightened up the feet, and the prospects of her little sisters, set the whole family upon their legs again, and released her from the difficulty of discussing moral dogmas upon a landing-place.

I have heard her say, that it was a surprise, not much short of mortification to her, to see the coolness with which the old man pocketed the difference, which had caused her such mortal throes.

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## THE RUINED LAIRD.

BY THE HONOURABLE MRS. NORTON.

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“WHAT ’ill that be, Mrs. Græme?”

“What, Aberfoyle?”

“De’il take it, woman, have ye no got a pair of ears to yere head? What’s that skirling and screaming among the bairns?”

“Why, how can I tell? they’re always screaming and fighting. I suppose the boys have quarrelled;—or, maybe, they’re teasing Jeanie ——”

“Weel, weel, take yere own way, Mrs. Græme; but it’s little comfort to a man to see the mother of his children, and the mistress of his house, lie daudling on a fine sofa, instead of being up and about, bestirring herself (there again! hear till’t), and preventing the little leisure poor means leave him from being spent (there again!) in flichting at the servants and correcting the bairns. It’s no for a reproach I say it, Mrs. Græme, but Aberfoyle was a different place when my mother saw the sun rise every morn on Bencruach, and wanted no grumblin’ lady’s-maid to draw away the curtain and show when it was daylight.”

The speaker was a dark, stout-made, handsome-looking man of about five-and-forty, dressed in a green plaid waistcoat and shooting-jacket; in his hand he held a paper advertising a show of cattle to be held at some distance from Aberfoyle, the particulars of which he had vainly attempted to master during the succession of discordant noises which had finally provoked him to address his wife. On this lady he bent an angry and contemptuous look; but he might as well have attempted to frown away the rain from his harvest-field, as indolence from the nature of



Mrs. Græme of Aberfoyle. He might have sworn, stormed, scolded, till doomsday; she knew he would not beat her, and she was just the sort of woman who dreaded, or, rather, heeded nothing else. Ten years since, both thought they had done a most satisfactory thing in getting married. The Laird of Aberfoyle (who, up to that period, when the death of his father left him master of the small and barren, but beautiful place of that name, had scarcely ever been sixty miles from home) encountered his future bride at Bath,—to which place he had gone to convey a crooked and sickly sister; and as he had been chiefly accustomed to draw his notions of female manners from this and three other more robust and, consequently, more active sisters, he immediately, with the natural caprice of man's heart, decided that there was a charm in the languid grace of the young West Indian widow. She had all the gentle sweetness of his sister Nanny, without the painful deformity and feebleness which made that gentleness seem only part of the disease. She had the gaiety of Catherine,—the beauty of Margaret,—the magnificent figure of Ellen, without the loud, shrill laugh, the tanned and harsh complexion, the horse and foot activity, which distinguished these young ladies. They were all well and comfortably married in Scotland. Nanny was well and comfortably settled at Bath, and the small annuity secured to her for which his father's will had especially provided; why should he not marry the divine West Indian, whose sleepy Creole eyes, so "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue," were always turned upon him, and whose indolent smile had such inexpressible witchery in it? There was no just cause or impediment; and there was a temptation, besides, in the knowledge that the widow, who had been a wife but a year and a half, had inherited a great part of her husband's property.

Græme of Aberfoyle, though poor himself, had what is technically termed "great expectations." His uncle, Sir Douglas Græme, was one of the proudest of Scotland's proud baronets. His castle stood on an eminence, and every inmate held his or her head proportionately high; his shooting tracts were large, he could afford the diversion of deer-stalking to any friends he pleased, and it was rumoured that he actually preferred that

they should succeed in bringing down a deer; an enthusiasm which all proprietors of deer-forests are said not to share. He was a kind landlord, a keen sportsman, a great breeder of cattle, and was suspected of winking at the distilling of whiskey on his wild mountainous estate; and he was, withal, one of the most obstinate men who ever wore tartan. Such as he was, virtues and faults, Græme of Aberfoyle loved him with the strong love of habit, and thought him the only great man in his Majesty's dominions; and from the time he was an infant, and rode round the hall on the large Newfoundland dog, to the days when he carried his rifle in company with Sir Douglas, nothing but kindly words had passed between them; and still, as years rolled by, the increased respect and interest evinced by the Highland tenantry, and the increased puffiness of the sighs breathed by the fair and fat wife of the sturdy Baronet (sighs of regret and disappointment), pointed him out more clearly as the heir to the honours and estate of the haughty Græme. This was a pleasing prospect, and one which could not fail to have weight with the West Indian widow; who, after duly considering that so kind a brother must make an easy husband, that the air of Scotland would brace her nerves and spirits, and that he certainly was devotedly attached to her, languidly imposed silence on some envious spinster of Bath, who was remarking on the broad Scotch in which that attachment was expressed, and declared her resolution to become Mrs. Græme of Aberfoyle. But, alas! the indolence which had been so captivating in the Creole widow was exceedingly inconvenient in the Highland laird's wife; and the patience which Mrs. Græme had seen so unfailing in the case of the feeble and deformed Nanny seemed entirely lost when it was taxed by her own graceful, well-proportioned self;—as years rolled by, too, Mrs. Græme grew less graceful—less well-proportioned. Three successive confinements, and six years of utter inactivity, combined to change

“The form that was fashioned as light as a fay's,”

to a corpulence anything but becoming in the eyes of Aberfoyle; and her neglect of her once carefully-studied toilette—that first symptom of dissatisfaction in an indolent and silly woman,—

deteriorated from a beauty naturally evanescent. But these would have been "trifles light as air" in the sight of her husband, had she happened to please Sir Douglas and Lady Græme. To his mortification, surprise, disappointment, despair, not only she did not please, but she was positively an offence to their eyes—a thorn in their sides—an object of dislike and contempt. Græme of Aberfoyle knew his uncle's prejudices well enough to be aware that the bare fact of his wife not being a Scotchwoman, and being chosen without reference to any one's taste but his own, would make the introduction of the divine West Indian, as he expressed it, "a kittle task;" and he frankly explained his hopes that she would take pains, and his fears that she might fail in making herself as adored as he desired by his dear uncle. And his lady, as her head rested on his shoulder, raised her sleepy southern eyes, and smiled one of those slow, fond, languid smiles, by which she was in the habit of expressing her assent without the trouble of saying "Yes." Evidently she would attempt to please; and, attempting it, how could she fail?

A faint attempt at conciliation on Mrs. Græme's part was followed by mutual disgust and mutual coldness between the relations. Aberfoyle found that gentleness of manners can be, and very frequently is, accompanied by determined obstinacy; and, when his eldest son was born, it was a matter of hesitation and discussion whether the laird of the little place should ride over to the baronet's castle (where they had ceased to visit) to communicate the tidings, or whether they should await in sullen silence the notice which might be taken of the event by the family. It was not interest, it was not ambition, which prompted the decision to which the laird came, as he bent above his new-born infant's cradle—it was *the father* which woke in his heart, and made him yearn to show the proud old man his beautiful boy; and he went.

A temporary reconciliation was the result; and, for some time, things went pretty smoothly, with the exception of the loss of Mrs. Græme's West Indian property, which hurricanes, mismanagement, and rascally agents, had reduced to an empty vision. At the time, this loss was little heeded. Mrs. Græme herself, feeling no diminution of her daily comforts, wrapped in the same

**shawls**, lying on the same sofa, bore the news with great equanimity; and Aberfoyle, intent on regaining his uncle's good-will, thought nothing of importance but as it related to this grand object, and took the occasional sneers at the *do-nothingness* of his once-worshipped wife with a calm philosophy, in which sympathy in his uncle's irritation, and consciousness of the truth of his uncle's severe remarks, seemed to be far more prominent than any wish to defend or excuse the defects commented upon.

But the time came when the deceitful calm, broken only at intervals by slight breezes, was to give place to the storm and shipwreck. Sir Douglas, in vouchsafing once more to smile on his offending nephew, for the sake of the little pledge before-mentioned, had arrogated to himself all the privileges of father, mother, grandfather and grandmother, uncle and guardian, in one. His natural obstinacy seemed to have found a constant subject of exercise. Whether the point to be decided were great or small—the choice of the young Græme's future profession, or of the day's dinner of broth or pap, —equally authoritative, equally determined, was the sturdy Sir Douglas. An unhappy difference—a mad disinclination on the part of Mrs. Græme to the clan tartan, and an expressed wish to substitute the royal Stuart as a proper dress for her boy, caused an open breach. Sir Douglas was bitter and haughty beyond even his usual manner;—Mrs. Græme was sick, peevish, and looking forward to the birth of another little Græme. High words were exchanged; and Aberfoyle had the satisfaction, as he flung open the door on his return from shooting, to hear his languid, passive beauty's thanks to God, “that she could afford to dress her child without depending on Sir Douglas,” followed up by a bitter execration, pronounced by the baronet on his own immortal soul, for having ever been fool enough to countenance and protect the daughter of a black,—and a command that she would forthwith remove herself, her child, and all that belonged to her, from the castle which her presence had polluted, and her tartan predilection disgraced. The quarrel may appear ridiculous—the cause inadequate—the conduct of both parties improbable; but those only who have witnessed it can vouch for the intense fury produced by slight causes, where mutual disinclination and strong

prejudice give every word a double force to wound, and make every action an offence.

Many years had passed away between the date of this dispute and the disturbing squalls of the three children, with which we opened our narrative. Many changes had taken place. Mrs. Græme had grown fatter, more indolent, and more complaining, with occasional fits of sullenness to vary her existence. Aberfoy's luxuriant black hair was beginning to be much sprinkled with grey, and his figure was losing the air of strength and activity it had formerly possessed; he had taken greatly to drinking, and gave way to sudden fits of passion, the vehemence of which was sometimes fearful. His frank, happy manuer was gone, and he had that cramped cold feeling about his heart, peculiar to men whose wives do not suit them, and who cannot pay their quarterly bills. The general opinion in the country was, that "Aberfoy would be ruined if Sir Douglas did not leave him his property." It was then already a matter of doubt with some whether eventually some other destination might not be found for the gold in his uncle's coffers, and the woods on his uncle's hills. Lady Græme had long since breathed her last apoplectic sigh, and the widower had betaken himself (to the astonishment of his nephew, friends, and tenantry) to a lengthened residence in England, and subsequently to a tour on the Continent. Graham Castle was now a blank in the lists of trespassers on Scotch hospitality, and Aberfoy sighed as he caught a glimpse of its grey turrets from one hill to another; and sighed too when he looked at his two beautiful boys, as they clambered up the rock and mountain, wild, sturdy, and radiant with health, to think that their grand-uncle had not an opportunity of seeing how well he was provided with heirs in a direct line. Sir Douglas at length returned for a little while. No notice was taken of the inmates of Aberfoy; but accident throwing the two children in his way, he was struck by their beauty and intelligence; took them with him to the castle; showed them hunting horns and powder pouches, stuffed deer and ptarmigan; and finally taking it into his head that one of his favourite dogs recognised in the person of little Douglas the infant so unceremoniously expelled some years before, he was unaccountably touched

by the display of affection in the brute, for the child whom his domestics would have deemed it impolitic and insolent to caress while under the ban of their chief; he gave the dog to little Douglas, and told him to bring his brother to the castle whenever they liked to come. Sunshine, in all its splendour, never brightened the face of nature in the eye of man, as did the intelligence brought by the children to Aberfoyle. His boys—his beloved boys—would at least be masters of the castle; his own struggles and embarrassments, petty privations and vexations,—what were they? If he died involved—if he died in prison—his boys would still be provided for. For the first time for several years, Aberfoyle felt sanguine, hopeful, inspired; for the first time for many months of increasing pressure and discomfort, he smiled, jested, and tapped gaily at Mrs. Græme's window, to announce the tidings, instead of dawdling sullenly into the little old-fashioned parlour, and flinging himself into his father's high chair, with his eyes vacantly fixed on his father's old gun, as it hung above the mantel-piece. But, alas! for the obstinacy of women in general—of Mrs. Græme in particular; the indolent spirit was roused, and she declared that no child of her's should crave the capricious favour of one too proud to own himself in fault, and who refused to notice their parents; she had rather die; she had rather starve; and starve they accordingly did. The children succeeded for some time in evading their grand-uncle in his rambles across the hills; and the mother's heart might have been softened could she have seen the lone old man, as he stood gazing wistfully from the proud eminence on which Græme Castle was built, to the glen, thick with fir plantations, where the thin blue smoke might be seen curling upwards from the house of Aberfoyle. Sir Douglas had never felt what it was to be *alone* till that autumn. He had had a wife and two brothers; they were dead; he had seen his brother's only son grow up, and almost looked upon him as *his* son. Now they were parted—alienated—even as strangers to each other. He had been fond of the three bright-haired, romping sisters of the disgraced Aberfoyle; they had homes, and happy ones, of their own, and came rarely, and as visitors, to the castle; and lastly, those little cheerful voices, whose shrill ejaculations of admiration and joy had

sounded so pleasantly in his ears,—they, too, had deserted him !

One day he found himself in the glen, and within a few paces of Græme of Aberfoyle's children, who stood hesitating,—afraid to advance, unwilling to retreat,—sorrowful and startled. Blunt and harsh were Sir Douglas's questions—frank and simple the children's replies;—the old man heard the truth, and, at length, setting his teeth, he said, “ Ye may tell your lady mother that she's the worst enemy ye ever had, let the other be who he may; and that she'll live to rue the day she ever set eyes on Aberfoyle's house or Douglas Græme's castle.”

Sir Douglas again departed, and again returned ; but this time he did not come alone. A lady, so beautiful, that the very piper (whose age bordered on eighty) was moved to an exclamation when he saw her, accompanied him. She spoke broken English, in a sweet clear voice, the tone of which, as Allan said, would have “ wiled the flounders out of the Firth ;” and clung to old Sir Douglas's arm, as though she would have crept into his heart for shelter. Even so did the lady cling to Christabel, in that exquisite poem of Coleridge's, till she had made good her entrance over the guarded threshold ; and even such a mysterious influence did she exercise when once admitted ;—Sir Douglas's will bent to the stranger's wildest caprices ; Sir Douglas's obstinacy melted before one glance of those passionate eyes, whose rarely-lifted lashes—black, long, and silken—made them seem so much more soft than they really were ; and within a year of their arrival, and exactly six months before the birth of Græme's little girl Jeanie, Sir Douglas folded to his heart, with all the rapture and energy of a doting father, the child of his old age—the joy of his withering autumnal years—Douglas Antonio Scott Græme !—and in that embrace, as in the coil of a snake, lay crushed all the faint, lingering, half-confessed hopes still cherished for his children by the unhappy Græme of Aberfoyle.

From the hour of her birth, Jeanie Græme never saw the smile of welcome on a human face. Whether it was that his temper was altogether soured by the events of the last few years, or that the presence of the little infant continually reminded him of the contemporary production at the castle, or a mixture of both causes, certain it is that Aberfoyle disliked his daughter, even be-

fore her dawning intellect taught her to shrink from his eye and dread his anger—or before constant rebuffs and ill-usage had given her little delicate face the expression so well described by the French phrase “*l’air de souffrance*.” Her brothers took the tone of the household with respect to her, and shunned the feeble creature who haunted their sports without strength of body or elasticity of mind sufficient to enable her to partake of them. Her mother, disturbed in her repose by the eternal rebukes of Aberfoyle to the little girl, and her shrill cries when the young boys, with the tyranny natural to their age, used force to compel her to relinquish a toy, or obey a command, bestowed as much dislike as her passive nature could afford;—and the servants saved themselves a vast deal of trouble in the minor concerns of the household, by sending Miss Jeanie to collect the eggs for breakfast, to fetch up milk from the farm, or go a message to the village of Pid-Muddie, three miles beyond Aberfoyle. It has been said, and I believe with some truth, that “they whom none love, love none;” but to this rule Jeanie Græme must form an exception. She not only was affectionate, but she bestowed the chief part of her affections on the very individual who seemed most to repel them—she loved *her father*, that little deserted, mournful girl!—and she would steal round to meet him when the report of his rifle warned those at home of his approach, without daring to question him, with the natural inquisitiveness of a happy child, as to his day’s sport; and feel a sort of pleasure in seeing him sit down to rest, and lift his blue bonnet off the short thick hair which time and vexation had as yet only partially changed. Sometimes, if he seemed *very* weary, she would venture timidly to propose mixing him some whiskey and water or Athol-brose, by way of refreshment; and when the permission was granted, it was a great satisfaction to her to “see papa so thirsty.” Gradually, too, she learnt to make herself at least *not* obnoxious—she no longer followed her brothers when they drove her back; she wept softly, or choked back her tears, or wandered out—far, far, and alone—to some spot on the purple hill, where heaven only could witness her weeping. She arranged the folds of her mother’s shawls, and comprehended her languid signs, which the Scotch servant-girls always required to be rendered



into words, and meekly, if not cheerfully, she bore to be commanded hither and thither by all who had, and by all who had not, a right to do it.

Meanwhile Aberfoyle's affairs grew more and more embarrassed, as he seemed less able to meet his embarrassments. From his uncle he had ceased to have any hopes; and, reckless and half-ruined, he defied his creditors, and oppressed his small scattered tenantry. For some time past he had, with one of those desperate and vexatious efforts at petty economy, gone to spend a week here, and a month there, in houses where, as the frank-hearted heir of the Douglas, he had been accustomed to meet a hearty welcome. Sometimes his wife accompanied him—sometimes the terms of the invitation civilly but pointedly excluded her; he was asked as “a bachelor,” as my “good fellow,” or “to meet a few friends who were coming to shoot;” and from these visits, where he had been daily drunken, mortified, and wretched, the ruined laird used sullenly to return to his comfortless home—to gloom over the days when *his* songs and *his* jokes were reckoned best at the board, and when his presence, like Virginia's, “made a little holiday.”

One cloud still darker hung over him. Antonia, the beautiful mother of Sir Douglas's child, seemed at first willing to show him kindness; but there was a sudden coolness, a sudden ceasing even to mention his name, and strange rumours went abroad of his having endeavoured, in a letter, to poison his uncle's mind against the partner of his home, by wild and vague accusations; and still stranger reports were circulated in his defence, as if Antonia had tempted him for the express purpose of being able more entirely to embitter against him every latent feeling of dislike and resentment in the heart of the jealous old man. Aberfoyle became more sullen; his house was poorer; his comforts decreased; while the heir of Græme Castle grew strong and lovely—more lovely even than the favourite Douglas of Aberfoyle. From time to time his sisters, Margaret, Ellen, and Catherine, endeavoured to make a temporary residence in their own homes agreeable to him, or they asked one of the boys at a time on a long visit; but dependence is at best a bitter thing; and when he saw his wife universally disliked, and taking all favours as if it

was *she* who conferred them; when he felt his popularity declining, and saw his sisters' husbands severally begin to show that they were weary of helping one who in no way contributed, as formerly, to their amusement; when he knew that his fine-spirited, noble boys, worse dressed, worse clothed, worse fed than their cousins, were twitted with their misfortunes as faults, and laughed at for the disclosures they made of the poverty of their own home; when, in short, he observed the impatience of *continued* misery which exists in the hearts of the generality of men, and which prompts that most ridiculous reply, daily made to the appeal of the houseless beggar, "Why I gave you a penny yesterday!"—Græme of Aberfoyle felt that he could struggle no longer; and he was preparing for his return home, with the sullen determination of an animal creeping back to its hole to die, when Catherine's husband (his host at the time) said carelessly, as he pushed the silver-wheeled decanter-stand down the polished mahogany table, "I wonder now, you don't let, or rather *sell* Aberfoyle." Sell Aberfoyle! The thing had never entered his brain—never struck him as possible. Sell Aberfoyle! where his father, grandfather, great-grandfather, were born, and died! the home of his childhood—the home he had thought to transmit to his children's children—sell Aberfoyle! At first a flush of anger passed across his brow at the suggestion; then, as he gazed round the table at the unsympathising faces of his stranger-friends, and saw only an expression of curiosity as to how he would receive the proposal, and of eagerness, as he fancied, to determine what chance they had of being rid of him—when he saw the coral lips of his own sister Margaret part as if to persuade him, he could maintain neither fortitude nor anger; his nerves were weakened by habitual excess and unceasing anxiety, and to the surprise and embarrassment of all present, the ruined laird leaned back in his chair, and, covering his face with his hands, he wept.

But bitterer tears were yet to flow at Aberfoyle. The misery of poverty and struggling against petty privations; the dissensions at home and mortifications abroad, were to be whelmed in one awful irremediable stroke. The merry lads, whose spirit privation could not tame, whose growth privation could not

check—the bright-eyed, fearless boys, so loved, so idolized by their father, were to be taken from him “both in one day.” Attempting to ford the ferry at the stream by Ben Cruach (a feat which they had performed hundreds of times before by the aid of their Shetland pony) they were carried down by the rapid violence of the waters. Far below the ford they were found, locked in each other’s arms; and the schemes which affection or ambition had planned for a future they were destined never to see, crumbled into dust! Long, long was it before the father would believe that both—*both* his sons were gone from him in a day, in an hour; delirious with agony, he tossed his arms wildly in the air, shouting alternately the name of one and of the other—calling to them to come back—promising pardon to the survivor for his carelessness in not having been able to prevent his brother’s death. Then he would make a desperate effort at calmness, and repeat, in a woeful tone, “Hush! let me understand—let me understand; it is not Douglas who is lost! it is poor Malcolm—poor little merry Malcolm! And yet one would have thought Douglas could have procured assistance in time!” And so, with incoherent sentences, he vented his grief, at intervals reproaching Heaven for having bereaved him so entirely—for not having spared him *one* child to close his eyes and comfort his old age. And little Jeanie stood apart, listening and weeping, but not daring to fling herself into his arms, and weep *there*; for *her* existence there was no rejoicing in the hour of joy—no memory in the hour of sorrow!

It was many days after this event, that the dark-eyed foreigner who now governed all at the castle paused by the rapid stream of Ben Cruach, where, lost in miserable thought, Græme of Aberfoyle sat, unconscious of her presence. “Mr. Græme,” said she, in her broken tones, “I am grieved for your grief, indeed: oh! do believe that I am. And I came,” continued she, after a pause, “I came to ask you whether I could do anything,”—(her voice faltered as she attempted to take his hand, and the tears fell fast from her eyes,)—“that is, whether I could not say anything to Sir Douglas for you.”

The bereaved father turned and looked at her, as if seeking to read in her countenance the meaning of her words. His face

was drawn and haggard ; his hair was as grey as the locks of old Sir Douglas himself. He gazed on the Italian for some minutes ; and then, fixing his eyes vacantly on the waters, he said, in a listless tone, " Tell my uncle Aberfoyle for sale by public roup. I'll just sell Aberfoyle, and make mysel' a little comfortable. Maybe he'll like to buy it ;—ony way, ye'll tell him Aberfoyle's to be sold."

The day fixed for the sale of Aberfoyle at length dawned. Mrs. Græme had been gradually sinking under the blow which the loss of her young sons had inflicted. More feeble, more stupified than ever, she passed the greater part of her time in bed, weeping alike from weariness and grief. As little Jeanie stole down stairs that morning to her usual humble household tasks, her father's voice called her ; it was unusually early for any one but herself to be stirring, and she turned, startled, to the door of the room whence the voice proceeded. Græme of Aberfoyle called again, harshly and passionately ; and the little girl hurriedly pushed back the half-open door, and stood waiting his further commands.

" Is yere mother up ?" demanded he.

A negative was pronounced in a low, timid voice.

" Does she mind what day this is, my lass ?"

One of the strange and unaccountable inflections which Jeanie had latterly observed in her father's voice, caused her suddenly to lift the long black eyelashes which shadowed her meek eyes, ( eyes whose colour or expression few could tell, so constantly were they fixed on the ground,) and look in that father's face. A chill passed over her heart as she did so. Græme of Aberfoyle sat by a little oak table on which stood a flask of whiskey and a tumbler ; his elbow leaned on the table, and his hand was thrust through his thick grizzled hair. Jeanie remembered that so he had sat the night before, and it struck her that her father had not been to bed at all.

" I am afraid, Sir—" she began, but she was interrupted.

" What are ye afraid of ? What—what ? But girls and women are aye shrinking and fearing what's to come. I dare say now yere mother's afraid ; but I'm not. I've just watched quietly for the day, and it's come at last, and I am not afraid to

face it. Nae doubt ye're afraid; but Douglas and Merry Malcolm, ye'd no have seen dread in their eyes this day. Weel, weel, it's all right that Heaven sends; and they're gone first who should have stayed last; and may be, when we're far away, the sound of their voices 'ill no ring round me from the hill, nor glimpses of their winsome, gleeful faces shoot across my path;—puir laddies, puir laddies! I'll stand the day better without them."

"Father! dear father!" said the weeping girl, "I'm not afraid of bearing my share of anything my mother and you must bear. I was only afraid you had not been in bed last night, or rested any way."

"Rested!" the tone in which the word was spoken thrilled through Jeanie's heart; and as her father turned his flushed countenance and bloodshot eyes full upon her, she shrank instinctively from the glare of intoxication visible in his gaze.

"Do you want my mother, Sir?" inquired she, after a pause.

"'Deed, then, ye've said it; it was for that I called ye, and no' to hear that ye were afraid of anything. Go to yere mother; bid her make haste, and dress brawly: she's fond of a gay shawl and grand clothing; let her take this opportunity, for I'm thinking it 'ill be long before she sees as much guid company again as 'ill be gathered here to-day."

Jeanie paused one moment longer; her father's manner was so strange and unnatural, and the desire to comfort and quiet him so strong, that she did what, uninvited, she had never done before,—she stole up to his chair, and, with a beating heart, she kissed his fevered cheek;—as she did so, it seemed to her that her lips were pressed on heated iron; and she shrank away, doubting whether her unreturned caress were even felt by the object of her affection! At length he suddenly turned, and, in a harsh, grating tone, exclaimed,—

"See, now; what are ye waiting for? Are ye afraid to move from the room? The house is ours, lassie;—the house is ours yet;—a day must go by before ye'll meet strangers in bonny Aberfoyle. Go!" and he struck the oaken table with passionate vehemence, as he pronounced the last word.

Silently, sorrowfully, the little girl withdrew to impress on her

indolent and miserable mother the necessity of being, according to Aberfoy's favourite expression, "up and doing;" and silently and sorrowfully, after wrapping Mrs. Græme in the amazing quantity of shawls her chilly habits rendered indispensable, and seeing her comfortably laid on the sofa in the sitting-room, she again sought her father in the vain hope of persuading him to take some breakfast. He had fallen into a heavy sleep, and the hand that Jeanie took hung in all the nervelessness of intoxication over the arm of his easy chair. Content to be allowed to watch him, she sat down on a little stool opposite; nor did she stir during the next two hours, except when the mid-day sun sent its beams full on the broad forehead and handsome, haggard features of the sleeping man. She rose, and gently let down the window curtain, after which she resumed her position: and a beautiful picture might have been made from that scene;—the prostrated strength of Aberfoy's muscular figure as he lay in the stupor of drunken rest,—and the wild watchfulness of Jeanie's dark grey eyes,—her parted lips,—her graceful childish figure, as she sat, ready to start, like the deer from its bed of fern, or the bird from its lonely spray, at the first sound which should reach her ear.

A strange and loud voice in the hall below broke Aberfoy's slumber; he opened his eyes and looked anxiously round him; the flush was gone from his cheek, and a deadly and sallow paleness had succeeded.

"Jeanie," said he, as his glance fell on his child, "there'll be some one come whose voice——"

The door was flung open before the sentence could be completed, and the barefooted Highland servant-girl announced Mr. M'Rob, Sir Douglas Græme's factor. A few words explained his visit; Sir Douglas had at length decided that Aberfoy should not pass into the hands of strangers. The purchase-money was ready—was paid—papers were signed—and Græme had no longer a foot of ground he could call his own—was no longer Græme of Aberfoy!

"There'll be no sale, father," said Jeanie. But she was unheard. That evening Jeanie wandered out alone to gaze upon the scenes of her infancy, from which she was to depart, never

again to return. There was not a spot on the purple heather, nor a clump of mingled fir and larch, nor a glimpse of Ben Cruach's blue stream, that was not dear and familiar to her eyes. Here she had watched her brothers from a distance, when they decided that she was not strong or active enough to follow them farther;—there she had sat reading in the sunshine or singing the wild and beautiful ballads of her country, till roused by the report of her father's gun, or the sudden presence of one of his dogs; and at one particular place, where the stream ran narrow as a silver thread between its banks, she remembered (and the memory of that one act of kindness was stronger than all beside) that Douglas and Malcolm had looked back and pitied her as she sat wistfully gazing after them, and had returned to carry her through the water. As she thought of that happy day, the handsome face and form of young Douglas, and the blue sparkling eyes of "Merry Malcolm," rose before her; she paused, overcome with the images she herself had conjured up; and, sitting down on the banks of the stream, she hid her head in her hands and, rocked herself backwards and forwards, repeating passionately from time to time, "Oh, brothers! brothers!" There was little eloquence in that one word, but it went to the heart of one who overheard the exclamation, telling of much loneliness and suffering—of affections choked back to wither—and a dreariness of heart unnatural in a child.

"Jeanie!" said a gentle voice; and a gentle arm wound itself round the slender waist of the sorrowing little girl. "Jeanie, could you love *me*?"

Jeanie looked up, and beheld the countenance of unalterable sweetness that had bewitched her uncle Douglas—the countenance of the bright Italian. Tears swam in those large black eyes, and her soft lips just touched the child's forehead as she asked the question. Whatever might have been her faults or her vices, whatever might have been the part she had taken in the mysterious quarrel between Sir Douglas and his nephew on her account, still she was a mother, a young and happy mother, and her heart melted to the desolate child, who, with two parents living, yet led such an *orphan* life. "Could you love *me*?" repeated she; and Jeanie, unused to tenderness, replied

weeping in the affirmative. On the heather bank, by Ben Cruach's water, Antonia Douglas sat down, and poured forth, in broken English, rapid sentences of consolation and endearment, till Jeanie's surprise fairly mastered her sorrow. No one before had ever seemed to care whether she smiled or sighed—no one had ever noticed her existence—it seemed to her as if she had fallen asleep, and that the spirit of her dreams wore that angelic face so anxiously bending over her; but when Antonia explained that she was the lady of the castle, and asked her whether she would not accompany her thither, Jeanie's countenance changed to a look of sorrowful indignation.

"My uncle Douglas has nigh broken my father's heart," replied she, "and I have no wish to look upon him." Antonia paused.

"But he may wish to look on *you*—and perhaps—no, not *perhaps*—but certainly, your going will do your father good. Sir Douglas is angry now, but he will only be sorry when he sees your little pale melancholy face."

Jeanie was easily persuaded. She took the proffered hand of the lovely Italian, and wound with her through the trackless heather towards the grey turrets of Græme Castle. Before introducing her into the presence of Sir Douglas, Antonia took her into her own dressing-room, carefully smoothed the long brown hair which hung in disordered waves on her shoulders, and, after a moment's thought, bound them with a tartan riband—the clan tartan, so disapproved of by the Creole widow.

Lady Douglas gently opened the door of the room where the master of the castle was seated, detailing many a feat of strength or tale of wonder to his idolized boy. His countenance, as he looked up, wore a perplexed and even displeased expression; and there were few who did not dread Sir Douglas's displeasure; but Antonia knew her power. There she stood with her bright bewitching smile and petitioning eyes fixed full on her husband's face, waiting to be questioned respecting the pale, sad child by her side, whose mournful features and coarse dark blue dress contrasted alike with the magnificence of the castle and the animated beauty of its mistress. The question, however, was anticipated. The moment Jeanie cast her eyes on Antonia's child,



the strong and remarkable resemblance to her lost brother smote on her heart, and, with a gasping sob, she exclaimed "Douglas!"

"Father," said the heir of Castle Græme, "who is that sorrowful little girl with such long hair; and why does she call me Douglas when I do not know her?"

"I do not call *you*," replied the weeping child. "I call Douglas,—*our* Douglas,—who never will hear or answer me again! Oh, brothers! brothers!"

"I will be your brother—I will be your other Douglas," exclaimed the young Græme, all the warmth of childhood, and perhaps of his mother's disposition, kindling in his eyes; and as he spoke, he started from his seat by his father's side, and came to kiss away the tears which flowed fast from Jeanie's eyes. Antonia advanced to Sir Douglas; her dropping curls of glossy black touched his bald fine forehead, and her breath was warm on his cheek, before even *she* ventured to murmur a petition in behalf of Aberfoyle's daughter. Sir Douglas seemed wroth, and a long and animated discussion ensued in which, as far as the children could understand, the Italian urged the gift of Aberfoyle to his disgraced nephew, as an act of generosity worthy her husband's heart. Her last words, low, tremulous, and spoken with a foreign accent, but distinct as a bell in the evening air, were heard and understood by both.

"You might pity him now—and help him now. Think, if it had been *our* boy who slept in that water, not to wake; he has only this one left; he is *so* changed; it shall be an atonement to Heaven for all those angry words;—*do*, dear Sir Douglas—dear friend, *do*!"

There was something inexpressibly melting in those slow, clear Italian tones, and her mode of expression. Sir Douglas called the little girl to him, and gazed attentively at her.

"Ye're not like yere mother," said he, "and ye may thank Heaven for it, though she was bonny enough when she cam' here first. Ye're like your father; and though there's one thing I never can forgive—no, not even if *he* were dead and gone instead of the puir laddies I remember so merry here—yet something I will do for Antonia's sake, ay! and for auld lang syne.

Here's a tocher for ye, and whan ye marry far away, ye'll think of yere grand-uncle, though ye never saw him but once."

Jeanie took the proffered paper from Sir Douglas Græme's hand, and murmured her meek thanks, though she scarcely comprehended more of his words than that they were spoken with emotion, and that he never would forgive her father.

When Græme of Aberfoyle saw his uncle's gift to Jeanie, (which was a dower of a thousand pounds,) he was tempted to tear the paper to atoms; but he calmed himself; he had little right to deprive his child of any portion of Fortune's favours, who, by his own imprudence, had made her all but a beggar; only, as he returned the deed to her possession, he could not resist a bitter ejaculation against Sir Douglas, and something he murmured of "profligate" and "wily," coupled with Antonia's name, though even *that* he subsequently softened with—"Weel, weel, she meant it kindly to me, and kindly to the lassie; false and bad though she be, the temptress, with her dazzling eys and her singing voice, I mind her laugh and the touch of her hand as if it were yesterday!" And a softened expression stole over his brow, as, with a heavy sigh, he looked out towards the castle, whose outline was darkening and fading on the evening sky.

The night of that memorable interview was one of distress and confusion. Mrs. Græme was seized with violent spasms, and the doctor, who had been sent for thirty miles, and arrived about the middle of the next day, pronounced her in great and immediate danger. Sorrow and alarm had done their work. She who had seemed to feel so little was dying of grief and vexation, and the last tie that remained to Aberfoyle, with the exception of his neglected daughter, was to be severed from him. For some days she appeared to rally, and it was during this season of temporary hope that Mr. Græme received the following note from his sickly sister Nanny.

"Dear Brother,—I have received news of all your misfortunes, and have prayed heartily that your burden may be made easy to bear, by the Almighty and All-merciful. I say nothing of what is past, (for what could I say that would carry consolation with

it?) but let me speak for the future, dear Malcolm. When I was a sickly, crippled object, and you were full of youth and hope, you curtailed your comforts, and gave up your amusements, to contribute to mine; *now*, your day is overcast and darkened, and *I* am better and happier, and (thanks to the care you took to secure my annuity) living at my ease. There is but one thing wanting, my dear brother: I am *alone*. If you, and your beautiful wife, and dear little girl, would come and share with me the quiet little home which, for fifteen years, I have occupied at Bath, I should feel happier than I have ever done since I last saw your face. We might all make one family; and I would do what I could to show how cheerfully one may live, though exiled from Aberfoyle.

“Your sister, NANNY.”

When this letter was read to Mrs. Græme, a sickly smile passed over her countenance as she heard the compliment to her own beauty, which was paid by the poor creature who, for fifteen years, had never seen the Creole widow, nor dreamed, little altered as she herself was, of the ravages time and circumstances had made in the loveliness of Malcolm Græme's bride.

“Let us set out immediately, Aberfoyle,” murmured she; and she raised herself from the pillow with something like hope brightening her eye. Alas! the settled departure was delayed to give time for her funeral; and her naturally kind-hearted husband forgot alike her faults and her follies, as he gazed on the grave which shrouded her for ever from his sight.

“Jeanie,” said he, as they sat alone in the twilight that first lonely evening; “Jeanie, my lassie, I have nothing left in this world but *you*.” And Jeanie felt, in this first notice of *her*, that her father's spirit and heart were alike broken.

Years passed away: and Græme of Aberfoyle, his crooked and sickly sister, and little Jeanie, continued to live together, and make, as Nanny expressed it, “a common purse.” To the two latter, their existence seemed a very happy one; and if poor Nanny idolized the gentle and beautiful child of her brother's house, Jeanie did not love her aunt the less. Her mother's face had never seemed so fair to her as the commonplace features of

her father's sister; for never had they beamed with so much strong and true affection when gazing on her own. But with Aberfoyle the sunshine of life was over. Pining for the blue hills and torrent-streams of his own beloved land,—cramped for want of the wholesome exercise which his accustomed sports had obliged him to take,—sick at heart and relaxed in limb,—the once sturdy Græme dawdled from place to place, believing (and perhaps with some truth) that the air he breathed, so different from the bracing winds that whistled down Ben Cruach, was gradually enfeebling his frame and infecting his lungs. His great, almost his only pleasure, was to hear his daughter and sister sing together, or alternately, the oldest of the Scotch ballads. To these he could have listened for hours, closing his eyes, and dreaming himself back again where he had spent his youth. Nor was it only to her father's ear that the voice of Jeanie Græme sounded sweet. From the few tea-tables to which her aunt had introduced her, by way of society, Jeanie's beauty and Jeanie's singing had been echoed to wider circles: she began to be a little star at Bath—valued, perhaps, the more that it was so seldom she was permitted to shine. Aberfoyle could never be persuaded to mingle in the set which habit had rendered agreeable, and almost necessary, to his sister Nanny; and he was continually taking umbrage at something which had been said to his daughter, in which his watchful pride discovered contempt or cold curiosity; or, in a fit of hypochondriac selfishness, insisting on her remaining to cheer him through the long melancholy evenings at home. At such times the unchanging sweetness of his child would strike him, and he would bestow a few words of gloomy tenderness which more than repaid her for the sacrifice of her own wishes. Many of the young men admired and flattered Aberfoyle's daughter, and, at length, the usual fate of woman became hers,—*she loved!*

It was in the midst of one of her favourite songs that she suddenly encountered the gaze of those shadowy eyes whose glances henceforward were to make the darkness or sunshine of her life. Without being conscious of it, a vague hope of seeing him again gave a new interest to the evenings she spent from home; and every evening that she did so spend, she was sure to meet that

earnest gaze the moment her light hand ran over the prelude to her song. Jeanie felt as if a spell had been cast over her. Those piercing blue eyes, with their long black lashes, haunted her sleep, and she started and wondered to find herself alone;—they rose before her when her lips parted to breathe her evening prayer, and the sin of such wandering thoughts made her clasp her hands more strongly, and speak the words more hurriedly, that she might by those means recover her self-possession. Every chord she struck, when her father bid her sing to *him*, brought the young stranger's form before her; and even when gazing on that father's face, and thinking of the days of her childhood, a shadow would seem to rise and bring, not the bright stream by Ben Cruach's side, nor the familiar scenes of those stormy days, but the little drawing-room in Bath, and the handsome brow and earnest look of the unknown object of her thoughts. Jeanie was timid and reserved, as might naturally be expected from one whose life had begun in so much loneliness: it never entered her mind that, by asking any one of her aunt Nanny's acquaintance, she might learn, at least, the name of this young gentleman who was so fond either of music or of herself; but she continued secretly and silently to wonder and muse, till one evening, as she drew on her gloves and prepared to leave her seat at the piano, the young stranger approached, and, in a courteous, but familiar tone, requested her to sing "*Allan Water*" to gratify *him*. Startled at finding herself thus suddenly addressed, and sad at the memory of her once favourite "*Allan Water*," which now did but remind her of her brothers' fate, Jeanie looked up in his face without replying. The young man smiled and sighed.

"You recollect many things, Jeanie; but I am not one of them. You look now as you looked the day my mother brought you from Aberfey to the Castle,—so sad,—so startled. Cousins should not need an introduction to one another;—look up and smile!"

"Douglas—Douglas Græme!" faintly articulated Aberfey's bewildered daughter.

"The same. I have come to Bath on purpose to see you. I learned from old Allan the keeper where your father went after

—but we will not talk of that now. I have been in Italy, among my mother's relations, for the last two years, hearing much music, but none so sweet to me as one of those dear old ballads; and seeing much beauty, but none like that my boyhood remembered, and my heart recognised. And now, may I come and see you? or does your father still bear in mind those unhappy differences——”

“It was not my father,” interrupted Jeanie, suddenly roused from the stupor into which this meeting had thrown her, by her cousin's allusion to the family quarrel between Sir Douglas and his nephew—“I am sure,—that is, I think,”—added she, blushing at her own vehemence, “that he will be glad to receive you.”

“Well,” said young Douglas, “I will depend on your hope; and who knows but, before I leave Bath, I may make all friends here and in Scotland? I am a very spoiled child,” added he, again smiling, “and I will make my father bribe me to come back to him.”

Jeanie's wish might have been “father to the thought” that Douglas Græme would be a welcome visitor in her home; but her prophecy certainly was not verified. With gloomy sullenness Aberfoyle gazed on the cheerful, handsome lad, who stood in his own sons' place, and rebutted all attempts to please him. Sometimes, too, a word or a tone that reminded him of his boys, or the mention of people and places in that spot he had once called his own, wrung from him bitter ejaculations, ill calculated to conciliate either Sir Douglas or young Græme. At length, when the latter found that his presence made Aberfoyle always gloomy, generally bitter, and sometimes actually savage, he ceased to come, save on rare intervals, to his house; and trusted to meeting Jeanie at little parties, or in her rambles with aunt Nanny, who was delighted to encourage the friendship and affection between the two cousins.

One evening, one summer's evening, the cousins sat together on a rustic bench in a garden. (Where aunt Nanny was, I know not, but it is certain she was not with *them*.) They talked of old days, for it was seldom, very seldom, they trusted themselves to speak of the future; and Jeanie had been eloquently describing

the loneliness of her unloved childhood, and the misery of those early years, when suddenly Douglas Græme snatched her to his heart, and while he covered brow, cheek, and lips with kisses, he exclaimed, "But you shall never be lonely any more, Jeanie; never, *never!*" They were interrupted, or perhaps he might have said more, (though he certainly did not seem to intend it); but little as he had said, and vague as that little was, timid and meek as Jeanie was justly accounted, and unaccustomed as she was to lovers' language, it is certain that she thus construed the sentence which had been spoken by her cousin, as for the fiftieth time she hid her face in her hands and blushed over the memory of his kisses. "He loves me—he will marry me—I am never to be lonely again!" It was, then, a proposal, —a very conceited one certainly, since it breathed no doubt of the lady's acceptance,—but still a proposal; and Jeanie scarcely closed her eyes that night, watching till the blue dawn should usher in the day which, she doubted not, would bring Douglas to ask her father's consent.

The blue dawn came—the sun rose—the broad burst of full and glorious day—the glowing noon—the sweet and quiet evening—the dim twilight and the starry sky—and hope and fear were over for that day; but what were Jeanie's feelings when the next, and the next, and the next passed away without a visit from Douglas Græme—when her father informed her that her spirits were so much lower than before she had taken to going out so often, that he requested she would spend her evenings at home, and aunt Nanny took to her bed with a bad attack of rheumatism? No loneliness that Jeanie had ever suffered was to compare with this, for none had ever been so anxious. The fall of a leaf against the window made her heart beat and her cheek flush; the sudden clapping of a door caused her to start and tremble; and all this time she had to read to poor aunt Nanny, who was not in love, a number of dry, dull books; and sing to her father all Douglas Græme's favourite songs. Jeanie thought herself thoroughly wretched in this state of suspense; but as there is no state of human suffering which does not admit of increase, she found there was a wretchedness yet more unendurable. Aunt Nanny had been a week in bed, and was re-

covering fast from her illness, when Græme's well-known knock caused his cousin to let fall the cup in which she was about to administer the usual medicine, and turn so marble pale, that when the servant-maid announced that Mr. Græme was in the parlour, she ejaculated besides, "But oh! dear me, Miss, you look like death!"

Jeanie, who never doubted but that Douglas came to propose, inquired anxiously whether her father had sent for her? No; the servant had merely given the usual intimation when any visitors arrived. Jeanie hesitated: she would not go down; she would wait till her father called her: she had not long to wait; and she descended the stairs breathing like a newly-caught bird, and scarcely daring to lift her eyes as she entered the room. But what was her surprise when she perceived that her father and cousin were talking together as usual; that Douglas greeted her in all respects as he had ever done; and that the only perceptible difference in the manner of the latter was a sadness, for which he accounted by saying that his father was ill, and his mother anxious about him! That he should so entirely have forgotten a scene, of which the memory alone brought the colour to Jeanie's pale clear cheek, seemed to her inexplicable; and when, at last, a solution did offer itself, it was one so miserable, that it had been better unexplained. Remembering, as she did, the excesses into which her father had plunged when first ruin stared him in the face, and familiarised with the effects of intoxication, by so frequently witnessing them, she decided that her beloved Douglas must have been drunk when he made that treasured speech of consolation. The conviction struck a cold chill to her heart, and gave a sense of injury to her manner, which it was evident Douglas felt. His sadness deepened, and, as he rose to go, he wrung his cousin's hand, and murmured, "Think the best you can of me, Jeanie." Even this was something: he was conscious that he had displeased her; that he owed her an apology; he did dread the loss of her good opinion; but oh! it was a bitter thing to be made suddenly aware how ardently she had hoped he loved her, by the extinction of that hope itself. She grew thin and sorrowful; and the light step that had bounded to meet Douglas Græme in former days, crept stealthily and slowly to



the little parlour, alike desolate in her eyes whether she was to see him or not. She had little comfort in the eager kindness with which poor aunt Nanny sought amusement for her, and less in the sullen displeasure of her father, who, more disappointed than, perhaps, he chose to avow at the decline of a preference so apparent as young Græme's for his cousin, took continual opportunities for sarcastic and bitter speeches against him; and Jeanie wept. When was there ever a woman so angry with her lover as to bear that another should blame him?

Still hope, which never forsakes the young, whispered to Aberfoy's daughter, that if Douglas remained at Bath (to which place he had avowedly come only to see *her*), if he still lingered, when he himself told her his father was ill, and his mother anxious for his return, he must have a motive; and what could that motive be but love for her? He still continued to visit her, to watch her, to listen to her songs, to speak affectionately of all that belonged to her. Poor Jeanie was puzzled; and she started, as if shot, when one day, as she withdrew at length her wistful gaze from the door through which Douglas had disappeared, her father observed, bitterly, "Ay, he's fond enough, but he'll no marry the daughter of a ruined Laird."

A new light was, however, soon thrown on the subject. It was rumoured that Douglas was not alone in Bath; that he had been seen at various times with a strange lady, who was uninvited to the Bath coteries—unknown to its inhabitants; and, indeed, one old spinster affirmed that they inhabited the same house, and that, happening one evening to look out of *her* window (an accident which occurred every sunset), she perceived the maid of Mr. Græme's lodgings drawing the curtains of *theirs* and that the casual glimpse thus afforded her gave to view a lady playing on a guitar, which was suspended round her neck by a cherry-coloured riband, and Mr. Douglas Græme stretched full-length on the sofa, apparently listening to her performance! Poor Jeanie! not only he did not love her, and had deceived her by his protestations, but he was bad, weak, vicious—a theme for the scoff of idle tongues. In vain did aunt Nanny drag her here and there in search of her lost cheerfulness; in vain did Douglas, when he *did* come, exert himself to entertain her; the ruined

Laird's daughter felt convinced that no one but aunt Nanny ever had loved her, and no one ever would. How she longed, yet dreaded, to see the happy, the blessed creature, who had obtained the affections and shared the home of her cousin! How many scenes did she imagine of pleasant converse and tender attachment; how many rambles in the calm twilight; how many welcomes on his return to her after a short absence—perhaps—*perhaps* after an hour spent with the ruined Laird's daughter! Every form that was unfamiliar to her eyes seemed as if it should present the features of the unknown; every evening that closed in on their little family circle reminded her of the spinster's story of what she saw when she had happened to look out of her window. At length an opportunity was afforded of inspecting these superior charms. Jeanie was taken to the Bath theatre by the despairing aunt Nanny, to laugh at one of the best of comic actors; and no sooner had she taken her seat, than a *chuchoterie* among her party caused her to look round, guided by the direction of their disapproving eyes, and there, within two of her, sat the faithless Douglas, and a lady, whose white and beautiful arm leaned on the front of the box, but whose features were concealed by a hat and long *pleureuse*, the back of which hat was all that the most anxious could see of her head. The figure was much draped; she seemed to have inherited a passion for shawls as great as that entertained by Mrs. Græme of Aberfoyle, and to have more need of them, for every now and then a short and hollow cough made Douglas turn with a countenance full of anxiety and affection, and fold her shawls more carefully round her. Jeanie remained with her eyes fixed, fascinated, and her heart beating till it pained her to feel it. At last Douglas's glance met hers, and she smiled bitterly. Mr. Græme averted his glances instantly from her, and bent forwards, as if to speak to his companion. Jeanie saw no more; the lights danced; the theatre rocked; the actors seemed to reel on the unsteady stage; and aunt Nanny's shoulder received the drooped head of her insensible niece.

By aunt Nanny's account afterwards, the stranger had shown sorrow and sympathy at her illness; had given her own bottle of salts, and appeared content that Mr. Græme himself should carry her out.

"Douglas!" exclaimed the poor girl, eagerly—"did he care? Did he come to me then? Ah! I knew he was acting when he pretended not to see me! And was she very beautiful?" added she, more sadly, as her head sank again on the sofa-pillow.

"'Deed, then," said aunt Nanny, indignantly, "I thought little about *her*, and you lying pale and dead in my arms! but I'm thinking she was just a painted, brazen creature, and if I could have got another scent-bottle, ye should not have had hers to smell to."

Other reports, however, differed from aunt Nanny's; the stranger was pronounced handsome, exceedingly handsome; and the boldness in her conduct, in thus making her appearance publicly among them, was by no means visible in her face; which, moreover, was not painted, but, on the contrary, as pale as Jeanie's own.

Douglas called, as was natural, the next day, to ask how his cousin felt. There was a discussion whether he should be admitted, for Aberfoyle's savage anger, when he heard vaguely the cause of his child's illness, threatened a violence to young Græme, which would probably end in a lasting quarrel perhaps, and Jeanie shuddered as she thought of it. Perhaps her father might even strike Douglas! He had struck *her* when he was angry—not lately—not for years—but then not for years had she seen him so angry as now. At last she bethought her of asking Aberfoyle herself whether she should see her cousin.

"Why d'ye ask *me*?" said her father, fiercely; "does he not come in and out, like a tame dog, when he pleases, and stay as long as he pleases, as if we were all in Aberfoyle, and *he* the master? Why d'ye ask *me* to-day more than any other?"

"Oh! father," murmured Jeanie, as she wound her arms round his neck, "do not be angry; I am ill, and faint, and unhappy, and cannot bear it; I will see him or not, as you think best; it is different to-day, now that I know the worst; only do not be harsh with *him*, father, if he comes."

Ill-judged was this conscious appeal. Aberfoyle's eyes flashed fire, and he ground his teeth as he turned to answer.

"Ha!" exclaimed he, at length, "you feel it; you feel that your father ought to strike the coward profligate to the earth,

for creeping into his home, to steal away yere heart, and give ye only tears in return! But I'll bear it now—I'll bear it, lassie," repeated he, as the terrified girl sank at his feet;—"see him, and ha' done with him—see him, and let it be *for the last time*."

And so saying, and flinging off his daughter rather than assisting her to rise, he left the apartment.

"Douglas," said Jeanie, after due inquiries had been made about her health and spirits, "my father says this must be the last time I shall see you, and——"

"I hope your father will find himself mistaken," said her cousin, gaily, as he attempted to take her hand. "I mean to see you very—very often, if you will let me."

"No, Douglas—no," murmured Aberfoy's daughter, while she struggled with her tears; "I think it is best as it is. I may have been vain and foolish; but now—now that I *know* you do not love me——"

"Not love you, Jeanie!"

Jeanie's reproachful glance was her only answer, and Douglas coloured as he met it, and said, in a low voice—

"We may love more than one, and love them differently."

No need was there now to struggle with tears. Jeanie's woman's heart burnt within her at the libertine speech and libertine smile. She rose, and drew her slight but graceful figure to its full height.

"I think not, Douglas Græme; and I am sorry the words should ever have been spoken by you to me. Farewell! and when you meet another as young and as lonely as I am, remember our parting now."

She held out her hand, and her cousin took it; he did not attempt a reply, and the door closed on him before Jeanie could believe that so they had parted, *for the last time*.

It added no new pang to what she already felt, when busy tongues told her of his departure from Bath in company with the beautiful stranger. He was already gone, from *her*, for ever! But a chill and a shudder *did* pass through her heart, when, some weeks afterwards, she saw a letter put into her father's hands, the direction of which was in his well known writing. The letter was sealed with black; it had a broad black edge; it

contained the intelligence of the death of Sir Douglas Græme, and the succession of his son;—of the bequest of Aberfoyle to Jeanie's father, in token of forgiveness; and something else it contained—a folded sheet, addressed, not to the master of the regained Aberfoyle, but to the bewildered, trembling girl, who, pressed to his bosom, wept the first tears of joy she had ever shed.

Oh! how beautiful Jeanie Græme looked, her meek eyes sparkling, her pale cheek flushing, over the contents of that letter! It ran as follows:—

“DEAR AND LOVELY JEANIE,

“It grieved me to leave all unexplained and wretched the day I parted from you. I came with the intention of announcing my departure for Scotland, but the sentence passed upon me, under the mystery and misrepresentation of which I was the object, rendered any other reason for leaving you unnecessary. Dearest, if your falling eyes could have distinguished objects that evening at the theatre, you would have recognised, in the face that bent anxiously over you, the altered features of her who brought you to us the day I first beheld your gentle countenance—the dark eyes of *my mother*! Since that day I have had no dream of love that was not clothed in your image, nor ever shall, Jeanie, though I were to live a long life, and never, never see you more. My poor father had been amused by my childish predilection; had wondered at the tenacity of the impression made on a boy's mind by your beauty, nor dreamed that it grew with my growth and strengthened with my years. After my return from the Continent I came to Bath, to realise the visions I had formed. I saw you, Jeanie; you were even more perfect in your quiet and contented womanhood than when, pale and mournful, you looked on me, and breathed your lost brothers' names at Castle Græme. After that happy hour in the garden (forgive me for having *seemed* to forget it), I wrote to my father for his consent to marry you. My mother herself brought his reply; and I confess, though I expected disinclination to the marriage, I never dreamed of the passionate violence with which he forbade it, and commanded me to return instantly to Scotland. Jeanie, my father had idolised me; he was an old, a very old man. My mother

impressed upon me that I might have his life to answer for, if, by any act of open disobedience, I braved his grief and anger. I was colder to you; you felt it; and it seemed as if serpents were gnawing at my heart: still I could not leave the spot where you were; my mother's reproaches and entreaties were alike vain; I *could* not quit Bath. She resolved not to quit it without me, and, at length, she tempted me by a promise of interceding with my father: (you are aware of her power over him.) She only stipulated that I should return without any further declaration to you. I wished her to see you; and knowing that poor aunt Nanny was to take you to the theatre (for your very steps were watched by him you believed unfaithful), I persuaded her to go: forgive me that evening's pain! The next morning a letter arrived, informing her that my father was ill: we travelled night and day; and his first exclamation, on seeing me, was, 'Good lad—good lad—I knew ye wouldn't break yere father's heart by marrying wi' Aberfoyl's daughter. Promise me—promise me—for I believe I'm going.' Jeanie, he was my father, my *dying* father—I promised him that ~~unless he~~ consented I would never ask you to become mine; but I added, that no temptation should ever induce me to marry another, and the stock of the Grames would be a leafless and a blighted tree. Whether it was the approach of death, or the pleading of my mother, I know not; but he softened latterly; his first step was to will Aberfoyl to your father, and then he spoke *your* name. 'I'd like to see her, Douglas,' (these were almost his last words;) 'but, no matter, ye'll bring her here after I'm gone.' Jeanie, I would have given half my life to have seen him bless you; but it cannot be; God's will be done! Write to me, and tell me whether your father will come to Aberfoyl immediately, and if I can make any arrangements for him there; or whether I shall come to Bath, and bring you both up to the Castle. Bid him think kindly of me, and kindly, too, of my mother, for, indeed, she has a strong regard for him, and for yourself, and her cough alarms me. Sometimes a dread comes over me that I am too happy, and that we shall not make one family long; but I will not sadden you, sweet Jeanie. Love *me*—love *her*—and say to your father, that the saddest looks she ever gave were those she cast from the hill to

the deserted house at Aberfoyle; and the saddest tones her sweet voice ever breathed, were those in which she spoke his name.

“Yours for ever, truly and lovingly,

“DOUGLAS GRAEME.”

Jeanie read the letter aloud to her father, and many were the ejaculations of thankfulness which burst from his lips; and many a kiss did he bestow on the fair forehead of his patient child: but, as she read to the close, he ceased to speak; and when Jeanie pronounced the last words, and looked up in his face, she saw that a deep red flush had come over it, and he turned from her to the window with a long and heavy sigh.

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## THE WAY TO BE HAPPY.

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Cut your coat according to your cloth, is an old maxim and a wise one ; and if people will only square their ideas according to their circumstances, how much happier might we all be ! If we only would come down a peg or two in our notions, in accordance with our waning fortunes, happiness would be always within our reach. It is not what we have, or what we have not, which adds or subtracts from our felicity. It is the longing for more than we have, the envying of those who possess that more, and the wish to appear in the world of more consequence than we really are, which destroy our peace of mind, and eventually lead to ruin.

I never witnessed a man submitting to circumstances with good humour and good sense, so remarkably as in my friend Alexander Willemott. When I first met him, since our school days, it was at the close of the war : he had been a large contractor with government for army clothing and accoutrements, and was said to have realised an immense fortune, although his accounts were not yet settled. Indeed, it was said that they were so vast, that it would employ the time of six clerks, for two years, to examine them, previous to the balance-sheet being struck. As I observed, he had been at school with me, and, on my return from the East Indies, I called upon him to renew our old acquaintance, and congratulate him upon his success.

"My dear Reynolds, I am delighted to see you. You must come down to Belem Castle ; Mrs. Willemott will receive you with pleasure, I'm sure. You shall see my two girls."

I consented. The chaise stopped at a splendid mansion, and



I was ushered in by a crowd of liveried servants. Every thing was on the most sumptuous and magnificent scale. Having paid my respects to the lady of the house, I retired to dress, as dinner was nearly ready, it being then half-past seven o'clock. It was eight before we sat down. To an observation that I made, expressing a hope that I had not occasioned the dinner being put off, Willemott replied, "On the contrary, my dear Reynolds, we never sit down until about this hour. How people can dine at four or five o'clock, I cannot conceive. I could not touch a mouthful."

The dinner was excellent, and I paid it the encomiums which were its due.

"Do not be afraid, my dear fellow—my cook is an *artiste extraordinaire*—a regular *Cordon Bleu*. You may eat any thing without fear of indigestion. How people can live upon the English cookery of the present day, I cannot conceive. I seldom dine out, for fear of being poisoned. Depend upon it, a good cook lengthens your days, and no price is too great to insure one."

When the ladies retired, being alone, we entered into friendly conversation. I expressed my admiration of his daughters, who certainly were very handsome and elegant girls.

"Very true; they are more than passable," replied he. "We have had many offers, but not such as come up to my expectations. Baronets are cheap now a-days, and Irish lords are nothings; I hope to settle them comfortably. We shall see. Try this claret; you will find it excellent, not a head-ache in a hogshead of it. How people can drink port, I cannot imagine."

The next morning he proposed that I should rattle round the park with him. I acceded, and we set off in a handsome open carriage, with four greys, ridden by postillions at a rapid pace. As we were whirling along, he observed, "In town we must of course drive but a pair, but in the country I never go out without four horses. There is a spring in four horses which is delightful; it makes your spirits elastic, and you feel that the poor animals are not at hard labour. Rather than not drive four, I would prefer to stay at home."

Our ride was very pleasant, and, in such amusements passed away one of the most pleasant weeks that I ever remembered.

Willemott was not the least altered—he was as friendly, as sincere, as open-hearted, as when a boy at school. I left him, pleased with his prosperity, and acknowledging that he was well deserving of it, although his ideas had assumed such a scale of magnificence.

I went to India when my leave expired, and was absent about four years. On my return, I inquired after my friend Willemott, and was told, that his circumstances and expectations had been greatly altered. From many causes, such as a change in the government, a demand for economy, and the wording of his contracts having been differently rendered from what Willemott had supposed their meaning to be, large items had been struck out of his balance-sheet, and, instead of being a millionaire, he was now a gentleman with a handsome property. Belem Castle had been sold, and he now lived at Richmond, as hospitable as ever, and was considered a great addition to the neighbourhood. I took the earliest opportunity of going down to see him. “O my dear Reynolds, this is really kind of you to come without invitation. Your room is ready, and bed well aired, for it was slept in three nights ago. Come—Mrs. Willemott will be delighted to see you.”

I found the girls still unmarried, but they were yet young. The whole family appeared as contented, and happy, and as friendly, as before. We sat down to dinner at six o'clock; the footman and the coachman attended. The dinner was good, but not by the *artiste extraordinaire*. I praised every thing.

“Yes,” replied he, “she is a very good cook; she unites the solidity of the English with the delicacy of the French fare; and, altogether I think it a *decided improvement*. Jane is quite a treasure.” After dinner, he observed, “Of course you know I have sold Belem Castle, and reduced my establishment? Government have not treated me fairly, but I am at the mercy of commissioners; and a body of men will do that, which, as individuals, they would be ashamed of. The fact is, the odium is borne by no one in particular, and it is only the sense of shame which keeps us honest, I’m afraid. However, here you see me, with a comfortable fortune, and always happy to see my friends, especially my old school-fellow. Will you take port or claret? the port is very fine, and so is the claret. By-

the-bye, do you know—I'll let you into a family secret; Louisa is to be married to a Colonel Willer—an *excellent* match. It has made us all happy."

The next day we drove out, not in an open carriage as before, but in a chariot and with a *pair of horses*.

"These are handsome horses," observed I.

"Yes," replied he, "I am fond of good horses; and, as I only keep a pair, I have the best. There is a certain degree of pretension in *four horses*, I do not much like: it appears as if you wished to overtop your neighbours."

I spent a few very pleasant days, and then quitted his hospitable roof. A severe cold, caught that winter, induced me to take the advice of the physicians, and proceed to the south of France, where I remained two years. On my return, I was informed that Willemott had speculated, and had been unlucky on the Stock Exchange; that he had left Richmond, and was now living at Clapham. The next day, I met him near the Exchange.

"Reynolds, I am happy to see you. Thompson told me that you had come back. If not better engaged, come down to see me; I will drive you down at four o'clock, if that will suit."

It suited me very well; and, at four o'clock, I met him according to appointment at a livery stables over the Iron Bridge. His vehicle was ordered out: it was a phaeton drawn by two long-tailed ponies—altogether a very neat concern. We set off at a rapid pace.

"They step out well, don't they? We shall be down in plenty of time to put on a pair of shoes by five o'clock, which is *our dinner-time*. Late dinners don't agree with me—they produce indigestion. Of course, you know that Louisa has a little boy?"

I did not; but congratulated him.

"Yes; and has now gone out to India with her husband. Mary is also engaged to be married—a very *good* match—a Mr. Rivers, in the law. He has been called to the bar this year, and promises well. They will be a little pinched at first, but we must see what we can do for them."

We stopped at a neat row of houses, I forget the name; and, as we drove up, the servant, the only man-servant, came out, and took the ponies round to the stable, while the maid received my luggage, and one or two paper bags, containing a few

extras for the occasion. I was met with the same warmth as usual by Mrs. Willemott. The house was small, but very neat; the remnants of former grandeur appeared here and there, in one or two little articles, favourites of the lady. We sat down at five o'clock to a *plain* dinner, and were attended by the footman, who had rubbed down the ponies and pulled on his livery.

"A good plain cook is the best thing, after all," observed Willemott. "Your fine cooks won't condescend to roast and boil. Will you take some of this sirloin? the under-cut is excellent. My dear, give Mr. Reynolds some Yorkshire pudding."

When we were left alone after dinner, Willemott told me, very unconcernedly, of his losses.

"It was my own fault," said he; "I wished to make up a little sum for the girls, and, risking what they would have had, I left them almost penniless. However, we can always command a bottle of port and a beef-steak, and *what more* in this world can you have? Will you take port or white? I have no claret to offer you."

We finished our port, but I could perceive no difference in Willemott. He was just as happy and as cheerful as ever. He drove me to town the next day. During our drive, he observed, "I like ponies, they are so little trouble; and I prefer them to driving one horse in this vehicle, as I can put my wife and daughters into it. It's selfish to keep a carriage for yourself alone, and one horse in a four-wheeled double chaise appears like and imposition upon the poor animal."

I went to Scotland, and remained about a year. On my return, I found that my friend Willemott had again shifted his quarters. He was at Brighton; and having nothing better to do, I put myself in the "Times," and arrived at the Bedford Hotel. It was not until after some inquiry, that I could find out his address. At last I obtained it, in a respectable but not fashionable part of this overgrown town. Willemott received me just as before.

"I have no spare bed to offer you, but you must breakfast, and dine with us every day. Our house is small, but it's very comfortable, and Brighton is a very convenient place. You know Mary is married. A good place in the courts was for sale, and my wife and I agreed to purchase it for Rivers. I have re-

duced us a little, but they are very comfortable. I have retired from business altogether; in fact, as my daughters are both married, and we have enough to live upon, what can we wish for more? Brighton is very gay, and always healthy; and, as for carriage and horses, they are of no use here; there are *flies* at every corner of the streets."

I accepted his invitation to dinner. A parlour-maid waited, but every thing, although very plain, was clean and comfortable.

"I have still a bottle of wine for a friend, Reynolds," said Willmott, after dinner, "but, for my part, I prefer *whiskey-toddy*. It agrees with me better. Here's to the health of my two girls, God bless them, and success to them in life!"

"My dear Willemott," said I, "I take the liberty of an old friend, but I am so astonished at your philosophy, that I cannot help it. When I call to mind Belem Castle, your large establishment, your luxuries, your French cook, and your stud of cattle, I wonder at your contented state of mind under such a change of circumstances."

"I almost wonder myself, my dear fellow," replied he. "I never could have believed, at that time, that I could live happily under such a change of circumstances; but the fact is, that although I have been a contractor, I have a good conscience; then, my wife is an excellent woman, and provided she sees me and her daughters happy, thinks nothing about herself; and, further, I have made it a rule, as I have been going down hill, to find reasons why I should be thankful, and not discontented. Depend upon it, Reynolds, it is not a loss of fortune which will affect your happiness, as long as you have peace and love at home."

I took my leave of Willemott and his wife, with respect as well as regard; convinced that there was no pretended indifference to worldly advantages, that it was not, that the grapes were sour, but that he had learned the whole art of happiness, by being contented with what he had, and by "cutting his coat according to his cloth."

## THE PHYSICIAN'S VISIT.

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It was November. Desolate, soul-chilling, rainy, foggy,—miserable November. What spirit can support thy weight, weary, dreary, dirty month?

It was night, rainy and foggy: the gas in the streets of London burnt as dimly as the lamps at Udolpho, seeming but the ghosts of themselves. The few passengers whom necessity forced into the outward atmosphere became sensible of each other's presence only through the conviction of concussion, and an ocean of mud covered the granite of our streets, earning to them the well-deserved appellation of the Black Sea.

The equipage of Dr. Sutheran had been long striving to make its way through an obscure route of narrow, plebeian streets, towards some unknown point of the compass, seemingly as difficult of attainment as the North Pole. Patiently had Dr. Sutheran sat, speculating possibly on some of the pharmacopœian mysteries unknown to our pen; but at length, his chariot-wheels ceasing to revolve, the sudden check gave likewise a sudden check to his meditations, and he roused himself to share more fairly the dilemma of his servants.

“What now, Adams?”

“There is no getting further, sir. I have almost swallowed the wisp of straw, and here is the street dug up for the sewers.”

“I will walk. Inquire for —”

Adams entered a shop, where the dim light shewed that the dignified inhabitant was licensed to sell wholesale and retail, and came back to his master with the perspicuous information, that

two turnings to the right, and three turnings to the left, and on a piece, and then down a court and up a lane, and three turnings this way and so many turnings that, and then straightforward, and then two to the right, and one to the left, and he would be in——

Thankful for so luminous a direction, particularly on so obscure a night, Dr. Sutheran for a moment paused whether he should proceed or return. We will not say whether compassion or a fee impelled him forward; but certain it is, that a black silk stocking, and a brilliantly black pump, in another moment emerged from the carriage, which, after receiving a dismissal, left the physician standing in the Stygian lake, and having evolved a halo of mud, whirled off, leaving its late master to all the horrors of his *dark* fate.

Long did Dr. Sutheran walk. Many were the dark alleys which he explored—many the labyrinths which he threaded; but at length, after a weary wandering, he found that he had gained his desired haven.

It was in consequence of a little note which had been put into his hands that evening at dinner, that Dr. Sutheran had undertaken his present expedition; and as it seems that women hold by charter a tenure for the credit of all mischief done in the world from Adam's days to our own, it may be concluded that this little note was in the handwriting of a woman. In fact, the characters were traced in a little feminine hand, and it told simply, but touchingly, that the mother of the writer had been long afflicted with a malady which country practitioners had pronounced incurable; but hearing that Dr. Sutheran had turned his particular attention to this peculiar disorder, and had been eminently successful in the restoration of some distinguished individuals, Helen Lee had brought her suffering mother from a distant county to the metropolis, in the hope of benefiting from his skill.

Dr. Sutheran knocked at the door of a humble dwelling, to which his inquiries had conducted him. He was admitted, and conducted to a chamber on the second floor.

On a low and humble bed — how different from the downy pillows and luxuriant couches of the affluent! — lay a pale and

haggard woman, whom suffering more than time seemed to have hurried into the vale of years. The hollow eye—the wan and sunken cheek—the pale waxen shrivelled lips—O sin, what sorrow is thy fruit!

The lowly bed was hung with a dark, sickly-looking drapery, and covered with the same, while, on its harsh texture, one of the thin attenuated hands of the poor sufferer was lying. On a finger of that shrunken bony hand, affecting thought! was the circling hoop, the bond and pledge of wedded love. Could this be the same bright, happy creature, who had once been the object of love, of hope, of desire? Alas, mortality!

And of love still the object. Blessed light! that burns in the faithful heart more brightly as misfortune darkens round. Blessed love! that follows us with eyes of fondness when sickness makes us objects of loathing to all the world beside. How different in thy nature from the vain, selfish passion, which men feign!

We have said that this lone and suffering woman was the object of love still. By her bedside a young girl was kneeling, whose aspect and countenance plainly showed that the sufferings of the mind might fully equal those of the body. She was thin almost to attenuation. Thin with care, and anxiety, and suffering, and watchfulness. Thin with protracted hopes and delayed fears. Hope or fear deferred, which makes the heart most sick?

She was kneeling by the bedside. Her cheek was very pale, though a vermilion line skirted her eyelid; and the tears, the unbidden, irrepressible tears, were streaming with all the violence of youthful feeling—feeling that experience had not had time to blunt or make more difficult of excitation—down on an open page upon which one hand was resting. The other supported a head that was aching and throbbing with its sense of suffering. Her hair, simply parted over her brow, was confined behind without the slightest attention to grace or ornament, yet suiting the solemn and sorrowful character of her countenance, was not ungraceful; while the black dress, coarse in texture, and not unworn in condition, suiting the *ensemble*, gave her somewhat the aspect of a weeping Madonna. The dim light of a faint lamp



alone rendered the scene partially visible, leaving it sufficiently obscure in its wretchedness for sadness and imagination; and there Helen Lee knelt, with the fast-falling tears of a daughter's love dropping, like gems, upon the pledges of a Father's mercy; for the volume which her hand was pressing, and which she had been striving to read until the tears blinded her sight and choked her utterance, was none other than the sacred word of promise.

Dr. Sutheran entered: he was accustomed to scenes of sorrow, but there was a something so desolate, so forsaken in the scene before him, so different from the grief of the high-born and wealthy, where, if sickness or death come, there rallies round a hundred sustaining friends, all anxious to press consolation on the survivors, and where even bereavement brings circumstances of occupation, letters, condolences, and that dearest of all dear things, sweet money-spending, that grief is often only another name for occupation: a different thing entirely from the deep and awful apprehension which had settled over that narrow chamber.

We have said that Dr. Sutheran entered. At the sound of his footstep Helen rose with precipitation. It seemed as though the climax of her destiny were approaching. There are moments when the timid are bold. Helen, bashful and fearful as a child, turned to meet Dr. Sutheran without a remembrance of herself.

"You are, I presume—I hope—Dr. Sutheran?"

Dr. Sutheran bowed. His eagle eye had rested for a moment on Helen's kneeling figure, and he was now busy in taking in its accompaniments.

Helen motioned to her mother, and again burst into tears.

Is that peculiar rapidity and perspicuity of vision, which distinguishes the medical profession, the effect of a quickened intellect, or a part of education? We know not, but we have observed in nearly all who are of the staff, that one of their rapid, eagle, furtive glances, has comprehended more than half an hour's scrutiny from other eyes.

Dr. Sutheran approached his patient. She was under the influence of opium, taken to lull the consciousness of pain. Helen

might lay aside the compulsion with which she suppressed her fears, for her mother lay in too heavy a stupor to be affected by any thing she could say.

With what unutterable, what thrilling anxiety, Helen watched Dr. Sutheran's countenance as he took the withered hand in his own, and proceeded to make himself acquainted with her state. She would not speak—she could have shrieked, but she so subdued herself, that not a sigh escaped her; and she leant towards him, almost devouring him with her large gray eyes, from which the heavy drops were falling, and with a parted lip as pallid as her cheek.

A few clear, luminous questions the doctor asked of Helen. She answered him concisely, without a superfluous word, for she had heard that he detested volubility. A few minutes' investigation to his quick eye and clearly organised mind made him master of all the circumstances of the case needful for him to know. He then turned his eye on Helen. "You are alone?" he asked, inquiringly.

"Yes."

"And your father?"

"Is——." Helen's convulsed lip could not utter—"dead;" but her eye glanced down over her mournful attire.

"You must send for some friend to lighten your nursing cares, poor girl, or you will be ill yourself."

Helen's whole soul was in her face. With a burning complexion, and upraised hands and eyes, the figure of breathless earnestness, she cried, "Is there hope? May I hope? Can you give me hope?"

The thrilling power of the most passionate feeling was in Helen's voice and eyes, and her agonised expectation made the moment's pause of his reply seem to her interminable. It was but a moment, however, before his deep quick voice clearly and distinctly said—"Yes, *hope*."

The physician himself, who had seen not a little of the world, was startled by the passionate vehemence with which Helen threw herself upon him, and embraced his hand. The warm tear glittered on it, and the fond caress passed over it before he could clearly know that he had been so honoured. It was but a

momentary impulse, but it was like a fresh leaf in life to Dr. Sutheran. He was a reserved and a laconic man, and those who knew him best, seldom approached him with familiarity.

He wrote, however. Helen watched the motion of his pen, but she did not dare to speak, even to ask him to forgive her. He rose to retire, and Helen timidly and softly dropped a fee into his hand. She could not speak; it looked so like insult to *pay* for such obligations. The physician looked on his fee, which glittered through his fingers, then on Helen, and then around the room; and, it might be, the thought of returning it came across his brain, but the remembrance of Helen's note, written with the orthography and diction of a gentlewoman, gave him the fear that he might wound more than benefit. The hurried movement with which it seemed that he was about to transfer the doubtful gold into his pocket; however, defeated his intention—it dropped through his fingers, and rolled on the floor.

“Do not trouble yourself,” cried the doctor; “I have not time. I have another patient to visit to-night.” And so saying, he hastily left the room.

“I was right,” said the doctor to himself, as he descended the stairs, “it was the last, or she would have offered me another.”

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“Anastasia, my dear, put on your shawl. That knock—it was the doctor. There, lie down on the couch. No, do not quite lie, it is ungraceful; only recline. Here, dear, take your vinaigrette. Emilia, have that lamp removed; it is too near.”

“There is not time, mamma, to summon a servant.”

“Then do it yourself. You are unsisterly, Emilia.”

Emilia obeyed, but rather dilatorily. “I have a great mind to throw it down,” she murmured to herself. “What a delightful hurry we should all be in! But no, it would seem so awkward: and I hate to seem awkward.”

So the French lamp, which was shedding too vivid a light, was removed; and the fair Anastasia *reclined* upon the couch. It is true, that Anastasia was very pretty, and all her adjuncts were so arranged as to enhance that prettiness as much as possible. She was naturally very fair, and as it was now her particular desire

to be pale also, she had not on a particle of rouge, though its presence at other times had left the sallowness which always follows on its use. A low cap—not one of your three-story, high caps—but a pretty, modest, cottage cap, laced with pink satin ribbon, and pink satin strings—*tied*, not *streaming*—a striped white muslin dressing-gown, fastened down with bows—(we like to be particular in the minutiae of ladies' dresses, it is so *important* and so *interesting*,) and black satin slippers sandalled with white, completed the equipment of the fair Anastasia St. Vincent.

“That will do,” said the fond, the tender, the anxious mother; “that will do charmingly—stay, a book. It looks too much like arrangement not to be occupied. A book, Emilia, a book! The Loves of the Angels! Psha, girl, not that! How I wish we had Hervey's Meditations; but here is Mrs. Chapone, we will make that do; so now——”

And all this for a grave, serious doctor—a fusty, musty, crusty doctor. Ah! but this doctor was not above five-and-thirty, and he had a practice of twelve thousand a year.

Dr. Sutheran entered. Mamma met him at the door with a head surmounted with a cap, and a cap surmounted with bows at least a yard high. Her welcome inundated him with words, but it was doubtful whether or not he heard them, as he walked straight up to Anastasia and her sofa. Anastasia looked soft as—as—Circassian cream; and her few murmured words were sweet as her lyre, and as silvery-sounded. It must have been Dr. Sutheran's want of taste, if he thought they breathed of affectation.

Anastasia relinquished the book which she had been *studying*, laying her golden vinaigrette upon the open page, and then daintily presented her soft, white hand to the doctor. He felt her pulse, but saw no more of the beauty of that hand than a blind man; or, at least, if he saw he heeded it as little. He listened with a sort of desperate patience to the tender fears of the mother, and the murmured symptoms of the patient. The mother implored him, with a white handkerchief to her eyes, to tell her if there were danger; while the daughter fixed her soft, inquiring, patient eyes upon him, and looked beautiful with all her might.

"Danger! no, certainly: nothing but nerves," said the doctor; "but, however, let me have pen and paper."

"Nothing but nerves!" thought Anastasia, to herself. "What an unfeeling, insensible wretch!"

Mrs. St. Vincent took care that the required pen and paper should not appear too promptly, and employed the interim in persecuting the doctor with civilities. She had doubted at first whether it would be politic to notice his muddy shoes, but decided at length on making them the pretence of additional courtesies; so she took occasion suddenly to perceive them, and to feel great alarm lest Dr. Sutheran's valuable health should be endangered. She offered to his choice and use every possible variety of stocking, which had ever been manufactured, from the coarse knitting days of our antediluvian ancestors to our own, without even implying that they might be too small; but Dr. Sutheran was inflexible, and in spite of her soft solicitude, after waiting for the means of writing nearly as long as though he had desired a pen from the Roc's wing, he at length said, and said it like a bear, as Anastasia afterwards affirmed, "Your paper, madam; you do not know the value of my time."

We need not say that the implements of writing were not long in forthcoming, after this uncouth speech. The nauseous mixture was soon inscribed, though destined to advance no further in approximation; for Anastasia had no design further to punish herself by approaching her fair lips to any such vile decoction; the doctor had received his fee, and transferred it to his pocket, without the slightest mischance, and, with an inflexion of the body that none but the most observing eyes could have discovered, had left the room.

But mamma had not done with him yet, bear though he was. She followed him down stairs, conducted him into the parlour, and there opened to him the fulness of her maternal heart, implored him to be quite candid, and dwelt upon the manifold perfections of her dear Anastasia as the cause and excuse of her extreme anxiety—so good a daughter, so sweet a disposition, so angelic a temper, etc. etc. etc.

Dr. Sutheran chafed internally; all the relief that he afforded to her agonizing solicitude, was comprehended in the brief

words, "Madam, your daughter will be as well as yourself in a few days, if she be not so now."

Mrs. St. Vincent returned up stairs. "Remember, Anastasia, that I cannot afford more than twenty guineas. Ten visits, two guineas a visit. You must make the most of them."

Very different, meanwhile, had been the effect of his visit in that abode of misery which he had last left. Like May, he had caused flowers to spring up where he had trod—a simile for which Dr. Sutheran ought to be very much obliged to our pen, considering that he was not particularly remarkable for an elastic foot.

Helen Lee lived again. All her powers rallied—all her strength revived. Dr. Sutheran's word "*hope*," seemed the ægis which was to shield her from all harm, to support her under every exigence.

O happy stage of life! would that we could feel again but one of thy up-springing thoughts, one of thy bounding hopes, one of thy fearless emotions, one of thy full-trusting feelings, one of thy generous confidences! One of thy glowing thoughts were worth a year of the life of him who hath tasted of the tree of knowledge!

And much need was there for Helen Lee's exertions, and nobly did she make them. Nobly, we say, though it was in the mean detail of daily cares, poor and trifling in themselves, yet making up the sum of daily comfort, if not of daily happiness. It was Helen, that with sylph-like step hovered round that miserable bed, fruitful in contrivances and resources to make it less miserable. Helen, who supported the aching head, and made the nauseous cup less bitter with the sweetenings of her love. Helen, who could now smile away poverty and want, sickness and sorrow.

Dr. Sutheran's medicine had produced an instantaneous change in the state of his patient. When he entered that obscure apartment on the ensuing day, he saw, at a glance, that a change had passed over its aspect. The neatness of arrangement had materially lessened the dismalness of its poverty; while Helen's glad eyes welcomed him, and consciousness was in the:

countenance of the sufferer. In spite of the rigidity and reserve of his character, Dr. Sutheran never felt a sweeter emotion than when sitting by that lowly bed with the thankfulness of relieved suffering before him, and followed by the adoring gratitude of Helen's looks.

A faint streak of the fairest sunshine gleamed through the narrow casement, and fell on Helen's figure as she stooped over her mother's pillow, opposite to where Dr. Sutheran sat. The physician's eye took in both patient and attendant; and, while looking in the glassy eyes, and feeling the parched hands of the one, a something like comparison glanced across his mind, as the fair image of his fair patient Anastasia presented itself. He thought of the soft affectation of the one, and he saw the noble disregard of self displayed in the other. He *had* seen Miss St. Vincent's white hand and pretty foot, her flowing robe, and her cottage cap, for few things escaped the doctor's observation; and he now saw as clearly Helen's simply braided hair, and her serge-like black dress—a garment but one degree removed from poverty.

"And what sort of night?" asked the physician. "No, do not you attempt to speak;" for the pale lips of the invalid opened to reply. "You can tell me, perhaps," said he, as he nodded over the bed to Helen.

Helen told him, in her fervent words, that the stupor had not passed away till morning.

"Who watched her?"

"I did," said Helen. "I could not leave my mother in a strange place."

"She never leaves me," murmured the poor sufferer.

"You will disable yourself," said the doctor; "I told you last night to send for some friend."

"We are without friends," said Helen; "the unfortunate have no friends."

"The unfortunate!" repeated the physician.

"Forgive me," said Helen; "I am ungrateful to Heaven and to you. You bid me '*hope*;' and can I call myself unfortunate? I should have said, we are strangers in London."

Dr. Sutheran lingered a moment in silence. Helen thought

He waited for his fee, and she hastened to present his first and second in company together. The doctor, however, laid the two on the table, hastily saying, "We do not take fees from widows, so never mention it again;" and before Helen could clearly understand his meaning, he had gone.

It was a fortunate circumstance that our physician did not take fees from widows, for Helen's exertions could scarcely keep pace with her necessities.

Still she sank not, but upborne by the spirit of hope, she was cheerful under a load of bodily fatigue and destitution, the extent of which she never paused to contemplate.

Day after day did Dr. Sutheran visit the poor widow and her daughter. To Helen his visits were the golden moments of life. All that he said became to her the hoarded treasure of memory—and let men say what they will, the memory of some hearts is sweet, aye, even sweeter than their hopes.

Dr. Sutheran, too, learned to unbend. Reader, take it, on our philosophy, that the rigid without are seldom the austere within. The aspect is only one of those natural deceptions which nature innocently assumes to hide its own sensibilities. The heart veils itself from the gaze of the unfeeling, because its feelings are too proud for exposure, too delicate for sympathy.

Dr. Sutheran knew that he was repulsive, knew it while he continued the habit, for we have said it was the disguise under which his softer nature hid itself. It was his torment, for the softness of that nature required sympathy, which its own repulsive veil for ever distanced.

But Helen's nature, on the contrary, was all fresh, all open, undisguised. Her mother had been long a sufferer, and Helen, through her girlhood, had been chained to her sick pillow. Their little family had resided in Northumberland in comparative competence, until some twelvemonths back, when, on her father's sudden death, their income had died with him, and Helen was left to struggle with poverty, and to maintain her parent.

That parent was to Helen's affectionate heart its all. She had never through her life left her for a day, scarcely for an hour—and that she should die! O death, thou art the crowning curse!



'She had exhausted the medical skill of their country vicinity, when the hope of Dr. Sutheran's skill was suggested to her. Helen had decision. She immediately converted their household treasure into money; had her mother conveyed on board ship; endured a suffering voyage; entered London as a stranger, and sent to Dr. Sutheran.

Through all this, Helen's trusting hope had borne her, but when, through an aching day and night, she had watched her mother lying in stupefaction, unable to exchange a word of sympathy, without a human being to feel interested in her sufferings, and alone in a vast and inhospitable metropolis—then Helen's heart gave way, and despair was fast possessing her soul, when Dr. Sutheran's "*hope*" anew inspired her.

He had given her back her parent from the grave, as far as human means can act under the divine will; that parent who could now smile upon her, talk with her, and enter into her plans and hopes; and Helen loved him, innocently and gratefully loved him, as the kindest and greatest of human beings.

It is sweet to be loved. Love, the highest and dearest gift of the Deity. It is sweet in every change, at every time, in every place. Sweet from all and to all. O disgusting feignings, what are ye to the light of true affection, though it beam in the eye of an infant, without interchange of intellect, and resting only on the divinity of its emanation! Of an infant said we? aye, even in the caress of a dog it is sweet.

To Dr. Sutheran the consciousness was precious. He carried about with him an acmé of happiness which he had never known before. Helen's eyes, her large, full, trusting, loving, innocent eyes, followed him wherever he went, and our physician was *happy*. All the world had respected Dr. Sutheran. Thousands had done justice to his talents, but it was the first time he had known how very sweet it was to be disinterestedly loved. He could even smile at Anastasia and her folly, and sympathise with Mrs. St. Vincent's maternal fears.

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It was at this period that that dreadful scourge, which ravaged not only Europe, but most of the portions of the earth where man has fixed his dwelling, burst out among ourselves in its

most fearful violence. Dr. Sutheran was one of those philanthropic men who had offered to incur the hazard of its investigation, in that place where its virulence was the most fearful, its form the most terrific.

It was needful that these patriotic men—patriots not to their country, but to their species—should be culled from those most distinguished in talent; it seemed to be a costlier sacrifice, but “verily they had their reward.” At the time when Dr. Sutheran had made his offer of service, he had not paid his first visit to the solitary dwelling of Helen Lee; in the interim, arrangements had been making; they were now completed, and the physician proceeded to pay that visit which might haply be his last.

Their little apartment was arranged with even more than its ordinary care. Helen’s mother looked more grateful, Helen more happy. We have said that our physician had unbent in his intercourse with Helen, and the consequence was, that Helen had forgotten all her awe, her fear, her reserve towards him. There was something in her open-hearted innocent confidence, so cheering, so amusing, from the aching study of his life, that he had insensibly learnt to think that his chatting with Helen was the relieving sensation of his existence. Independent of her grateful affection, there was a raciness in the natural suggestions of her unsophisticated thoughts which carried a peculiar charm to his philosophical and somewhat metaphysical mind.

On this day it would not have displeased him to have found Helen sad. On the contrary, she was gay. She smiled in his face, and told him he was grave.

He denied the charge.

“Then worse, Dr. Sutheran—you are sorrowful.”

“No, Helen, no.”

“No, doctor, no. You may be grave and even sorrowful in every place in the wide world, but never here, never in this little room. At balls, at banquets, and in palaces, but never in our little chamber. O, how I should like to be rich, and then I would build such a beautiful temple over this place, and dedicate it to you, as the ancients used to do to their heroes.”

"You little heathen."

"O, I don't mind your calling me names: but no, I would not change this dear room. I would not move an article of furniture. I would keep it all precisely as it is, to remind me where you had been, and what you had done. But I think I should like to be rich too, but then you must be poor, or else it would be of no use."

"Would it not be as well, Helen, for me to be rich?"

"No, not quite, because then I could give you nothing."

"Might I not give to you? Would not that be the same?"

"No," said Helen, "no. It would be such a delightful thing to make presents to you. And yet," surely the thought was womanly, "perhaps you are so proud that you would rather *give*. You would not have the kindness to *take*. It is only women who have affection enough to be the inferior. So it is better perhaps as it is;"—and Helen breathed a discontented sigh.

"Perhaps it is better, Helen, as it is," replied Dr. Sutheran, "but remember that affection knows no inferiority; and now, tell me, could you be content to take? Be candid, my little Helen?"

Helen felt instantly that Dr. Sutheran was forsaking imaginary ground for their real position. Her cheek flushed as she said, "Would you place me on ground upon which you would not stand yourself? Unkind Dr. Sutheran!" And she tried to speak playfully.

"Unkind Helen," responded Dr. Sutheran, in a reproachful tone; "and more than unkind, thus to embitter my farewell visit."

Helen's face turned from the deepest crimson to the deadliest white. She rose and left the room.

Dr. Sutheran kindly and calmly repeated to Mrs. Lee all those directions which he thought might conduce to her final re-establishment. He told her that he should be absent for a time, as he was going a journey, but that she should hear from him again on his return; and he took his leave.

Dr. Sutheran had carefully concealed from Helen the nature

of his absence. He wished not to prove her feelings by her misery. He wished to save her from all anxiety.

Our physician went home and wrote a codicil to his will. He would gladly have saved her from present toil. Helen's interdiction did not reach the future.

Dr. Sutheran's hope was futile. Helen saw in a public paper the nature of his expedition; saw his name, his talents, his philanthropy, his self-immolation, lauded to the skies. From that hour Helen's energy had gone. Her soul withered, her spirit died within her. She thought of that one word "*hope*," but it was only to loathe a feeling that she could not feel. Pale, sickly days succeeded to each other. Her duties round her mother were performed mechanically; but where was the buoyancy that had once lightened them?

Helen was sitting by the lonely window. She was working. It was for their subsistence.

"Cease, my dear Helen," said her mother; "the light is too dim. You will blind yourself."

Helen knew it, and it was therefore that she dared not weep. Not weep even for him, lest she should see her mother starve. How are we governed!

Her head drooped upon her hand. She was living in the past, and probably the din of battle would not have aroused her, when an indistinct sound, a measured footfall, that to indifferent ears would have been scarcely audible, struck not on her ear alone, but on her heart. The blood rushed to its stronghold in eddying whirls, the brain reeled—Helen felt and knew that Dr. Sutheran had returned.

Women are strange compounds. A month ago, Helen would almost have thrown herself into his arms. Now, she knew that she loved him; and with that sudden hypocrisy that, it may be, delicacy teaches, she controlled her deep delight, her passion of joy, and was in a miraculously little time prepared to receive him with an indifference that would have disgraced the commonest acquaintance.

Had Dr. Sutheran had time to see that frigid indifference, he might have doubted Helen's affection, and suppressed his own. Happily they had for a time exchanged characters. The cold,

the austere physician, abandoning himself to his happiness, took Helen's hands within his own, and in a voice of unutterable affection, said, "Welcome me, *my* Helen. You, who have been so good a daughter, will not as a wife be less precious. *Be mine!*"

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## THE STORY OF HESTER MALPAS.

BY MISS LANDOR.

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THERE is a favourite in every family ; and, generally speaking, that favourite is the most troublesome member in it. People evince a strange predilection for whatever plagues them. This, however, was not the case with Hester Malpas. The eldest of six children, she was her father's favourite, because, from her only, was he sure of a cheerful word and a bright smile. She was her mother's favourite, because every one said that she was the very image of that mother herself at sixteen. She was the favourite of all her brothers and sisters, because she listened patiently to all their complaints, and contributed to all their amusements; an infallible method, by the by, of securing popularity on a far more extended scale.

Mr. Malpas was the second son of a prosperous tradesman in Wapping—a sickly child. Of course, he shrank from active amusement. Hence originated a love of reading, which, in his case, as in many others, was mistaken for a proof of abilities. Visions of his being a future lord chancellor, archbishop of Canterbury, or, at least, an alderman, soon began to stimulate the ambition of the little back parlour, where his parents nightly discussed the profits of the day, and the prospects of their family. The end of these hopes was a very common one;—at forty, Richard Malpas was a poor curate in Wiltshire, with a wife and six children, and no chance of bettering his condition. He had married for love, under the frequent delusion of supposing that love will last under every circumstance most calculated to destroy it; and, secondly, that it can supply the place of every thing

else. Many a traveller paused to admire the beauty of the curate's cottage, with the pear-tree, whose trained branches covered the front; and the garden where, if there were few flowers, there was much fruit; and which was bounded on one side by a green field, and on the other by the yet greener churchyard. Behind stood the church, whose square tower was covered with ivy of a hundred years' growth. Two old yews overshadowed the little gate; and rarely did the sunset glitter on the small panes of the Gothic windows, without assembling half the children in the hamlet, whose gay voices and ringing laughter were in perfect unison with a scene whose chief characteristic was cheerfulness. But as whoso could have lifted up the ivy, would have seen that the wall was mouldering beneath; and whoso could have looked from the long, flower-filled grass, and the glad and childish occupants of the rising mounds, to the dust and ashes that lay perishing below; so, who could have looked into the interior of that pretty cottage, would have seen regret, want, and despondency. Other sorrows soften the heart,—poverty hardens it. Nothing like poverty for chilling the affections and repressing the spirits. Its annoyances are all of the small and mean order; its regrets all of a selfish kind; its presence is perpetual; and the scant meal, and the grudging fire, are repeated day by day, yet who can become accustomed to them? Mr. and Mrs. Malpas had long since forgotten their youth; and if ever they referred to their marriage, on his part it was to feel, too late, what a drawback it had been to his prospects, and to turn in his mind all the college comforts and quiet of which his ill-fated union had deprived him. Nor was his wife without her regrets. A woman always exaggerates her beauty and its influence when they are past; and it was a perpetual grief to think what her pretty face might have done for her. As the children grew up, discomfort increased; breakfast, dinner—supper was never attempted,—instead of assembling an affectionate group, each ready with some slight tale of daily occurrence, to which daily intercourse gives such interest, these meals were looked forward to with positive fear. There was never quite enough for all; and the very regret of the parents took, as is a common case, the form of scolding. When Hayley tried Serena's temper,

he forgot the worst, the real trial—want; and want, too, felt more for others than for yourself. The mother's vanity, too,—and what mother is without vanity for her children?—was a constant grievance. It was hard that hers should be the prettiest and worst-dressed in the village. In her, the distress of their circumstances took the form of perpetual irritability,—that constant peevishness which frets over every thing; while, in Mr. Malpas, it wore the provoking shape of sullen indifference.

In the midst of all this, Hester grew up;—but there are some natures nothing can spoil. The temper was as sweet as if it had not breathed the air of eternal quarrellings; the spirits as gay as if they had not been tried by the wearing disappointment of being almost always exerted in vain. She had ever something to do—something to suggest; and when the present was beyond any actual remedy, she could at least look forward; and this she did with a gaiety and an energy altogether contagious. Every body has some particular point on which they pique themselves; generally something which ill deserves the pride bestowed upon it. Richard Malpas particularly prided himself on never having stooped to conciliate the relations who had both felt, and very openly expressed, the anger of disappointed hope on his marriage. His brother had lived and died in his father's shop: perhaps, as his discarded relative formed no part of his accounts, he had forgotten his very existence. On his death, shop and property were left to his sister Hester, or, as she was now called, Mrs. Hester Malpas. After a few years, during which she declared that she was cheated by every body,—though, it must be confessed, that the year's balance told a different story every Christmas,—she sold her interest in the shop, and, retiring to a small house in the same street, resolved on making her old age comfortable. It is very hard to give up a favourite weak point, but, to this sister, Mr. Malpas at length resolved on applying for assistance;—he had, at least, the satisfaction of keeping the step a secret from his wife. Hester was his confidant,—Hester, the sole admirer of “his beautiful letter.” Hester put it in the post-office; and Hester kept up his hopes by her own; and Hester went every day, even before it was possible an answer could arrive, to ask, “Any letter for my father?” for Mr. Malpas, fear-



ing, in spite of his sanguine confident, the probability of a refusal, had resolved that the letter should not be directed to his own house. Any domestic triumph, that the advice of writing, so often urged, had been taken too late, was, by this means, averted.

The day of the actual return of post passed, and brought no answer; but the next day saw Hester flying, with breathless speed, towards the little fir-tree copse, where her father awaited her coming. She held a letter in her hand. Mr. Malpas snatched it from her. He at once perceived that it was double, and post-paid. This gave him courage to open it, and the first thing he saw was the half of a bank-note for twenty pounds. To Hester this seemed inexhaustible riches; and even to her father it was a prodigious sum. For the first time she saw the tears stand in his eyes.

"Read it, child," said he, in a broken voice. Hester kissed him, and was silent for a moment, and then proceeded with her task. The hand-writing was stiff, ugly, and legible, though the letters rather resembled the multiplication-table than the alphabet. The epistle ran as follows:—

"DEAR BROTHER,—Received yours on the 16th instant, and reply on the 18th; the delay of one post being caused by getting a Bank of England note. I send one half for safety, and the other will be sent to-morrow. They can then be pasted neatly together. I sha'n't go back to old grievances, as your folly has been its own punishment. If people will be silly enough to marry, they must take the consequences. You say that your eldest daughter is named after me. Send her up to town, and I will provide for her. It will be one mouth less to feed. You may count on the same sum (twenty pounds) yearly. I shall send directions about Hester's coming up, in my next letter.

"Your affectionate sister,

"HESTER MALPAS."

Poor Hester gasped for breath when she came to her own name. Even her glad temper sank at the bare idea of a separation from her parents.

"Me, father!" exclaimed she; "oh! what will my mother say?"

"No; as she always does to any thing I propose," said her father.

To this Hester made no reply. She had long felt silence was the only answer to such exclamations. For once, like her father, Hester dreaded to return home. "Is it possible," thought she, "we can be taking so much money home so slowly?" and she loitered even more than her father. Hester had yet to learn that no earthly advantage comes without its drawback. At length the silence was broken, and Hester listened with conviction, and a good fit of crying, to the many advantages her whole family were to derive from her adoption by her aunt. Still, "What will my mother say?" was the only answer she could give.

When we expect the worst, it never happens. Mrs. Malpas caught at the idea of Hester's going to town with an eagerness which inflicted on poor Hester the severest pang she had ever known. "And is my mother so ready to part with me?" was a very bitter thought. Still, if she could have read that mother's heart, she would have been comforted. It was the excess of affection that made the sacrifice easy. All the belief in the sovereign power of a pretty face,—all the imagination which Mrs. Malpas had long ceased to exercise for herself,—were exerted for her daughter. Like all people, who have lived their whole life in the country, she had the most unreal, the most magnificent ideas of London. Once there, and Hester's future fortune was certain. Besides, she had another reason, which, however, from the want of confidence which ran through the whole family, she kept to herself. There was a certain handsome youth, the son of a neighbouring farmer, between whom and Hester she thought the more distance the better. She had suffered too much from a love-match herself, to entertain the least kindness towards such a step. The faults we ourselves commit are always those to which we are most unforgiving. Hester herself had never thought about what the feeling was which made her blush whenever she met Frank Horton. No girl ever does. It was shyness, not deception, that made her avoid even the mention of his name. The word love had never passed between them. Still the image of her early playmate was very frequent amid the re-

grets with which she regarded leaving her native place. The next day brought the second letter from Mrs. Hester Malpas. It contained the other half of the bank-note; and, as it never seemed to have crossed the good lady's mind that there could be an objection to her proposed adoption, she had made every arrangement for her journey the following week. She had taken her place in the coach, stated her intention of meeting her at the inn, and hoped that she worked well at her needle. There was little preparation to be made. Her aunt had said, "that she could come with only the clothes on her back," and she was taken very nearly at her word.

The evening before her departure, she went for a solitary walk, lingering amid all her old favourite haunts. Her spirits were worn out and dejected. It jarred cruelly upon her affectionate temper to find that her absence was matter of rejoicing to her whole family. The children, naturally enough, connected Hester's departure with the new indulgences, the result of their aunt's gift; and childhood is as selfish from thoughtlessness as age is from calculation. Her parents merged in the future that present which weighed so heavily upon poor Hester. She was stooping, with tearful eyes, to gather some wild flowers in the hedge, when Frank Horton, who had joined her unperceived, gathered them for her.

"And so, Hester, you are going to London, and will soon forget all your old friends?" Hester had no voice to assure him that she should not. Her silence gave her companion the better opportunity of expressing his regrets, doubly touching to the affectionate girl, who had just been thinking that her departure was lamented by no one. Hester's heart was so full of love and sorrow, that it was impossible for some not to fall to his share; and they parted, if not with a positive promise, yet with a hope that their future life would, in some way or other, be connected together.

It was a sleepless night with the young traveller; and she awoke from a confused dream, which blended together familiar objects in a thousand fantastic combinations. She awakened up suddenly, and the first object on which her eyes opened was her mother,—the mother she had thought almost unkind,—seated

weeping by the bedside. Not all Mrs. Malpas brilliant visions of the future could console, when it came to the actual parting. She bent over the fair and innocent face which looked so child-like asleep, in an agony of fear and love. To-morrow, and the music of that ready footstep would be silent in their house,—to-morrow, and those sweet eyes would no more meet her own with their peculiar bright, yet watchful look. A little corded box was on the floor; she turned away from it, and burst into tears. It was the last suppressed sob that had roused her daughter. In a moment Hester was up, and weeping on her mother's neck; and yet, sad as were the tears, they were pleasant when compared with those with which she had cried herself to sleep.

It was later than they had supposed; and the sound of the church clock striking five made them start; and Hester, with a trembling hand, began to dress. In half an hour the London coach would pass, and there were some fields between them and the high-road. This last half hour showed Hester how truly she was beloved. The youngest child neglected the breakfast; and while her father pressed her to eat, he could not eat himself. All felt movement a relief,—all accompanied her to the gate where they were to wait for the coming stage. They had scarcely reached the road, when the guard's horn was heard in the distance. The coach appeared,—it stopped,—Hester took her place behind,—and again the horses were at full speed. The young traveller looked back; but her head was dizzy with the rapid and unaccustomed motion. The little group, that stood watching, swam before her sight. Still she saw them, and she did not feel quite alone. Tears shut them out,—she took her handkerchief; it was raised scarce an instant, but a rapid turn in the road shut them out from her lingering and longing gaze.

The guard, under whose especial charge she had been placed, did his best to console her; but found the attempt vain, and as he had children of his own, thought it all very proper that a daughter should cry at parting with her parents. He left her to the full indulgence of her tears. Nothing could well be more dreary than the journey was to poor Hester. The bright morning soon clouded over, and a small, drizzling rain covered every

object that might have diverted her attention, with a thick, dull mist. Such a sad and monotonous day leaves nothing to tell; and Hester found herself bewildered, cold, tired, hungry, and wretched, in the inn-yard where the coach stopped. Such a scene of confusion had never before met her sight; and she stood hopeless and frightened precisely in the place where the guard had helped her to alight, without an idea, or even a care, of what would happen to her next. She was roused by some one at her elbow inquiring "for the young woman that Mrs. Hester Malpas expected;" and in a moment the guard had consigned her to the care of a stranger. It was a neighbour, whom her aunt had sent to meet her. Mr. Lowndes asked her how she did, received no answer, made up his mind that she was stupid and shy, considered that to talk was no part of his agreement with Mrs. Malpas, and hurried along the streets as fast as possible. The noise, the multitude of houses, the haste, the silence, made poor Hester's heart die within her. She felt indeed that she was come to a strange land, and grew more and more wretched at every narrow street through which they passed. At length her conductor stopped at a door. Hester started at the sound of the knocker. She was astonished at her guide's audacity in making such a noise, though, Heaven knows, it was but a tame, meagre sort of rap after all.

"I have brought your niece safe," said Mr. Lowndes; "and good night, in a hurry."

"Won't you walk in and have some supper?" said a voice so harsh that it gave an invitation the sound of a dismissal.

"No, no; some other night. I and my mistress will look in together."

Hester was sorry to part with him; she felt so desolate, that even the companionship of half an hour was something like a claim to an acquaintance.

"Come in, child," said the same forbidding voice; and a hand laid upon her arm conducted her into a small but comfortable-looking parlour. The light cheered, the warmth revived her, but still Hester could not muster resolution enough to look up.

"Can't the girl speak?"

Hester tried to murmur some inarticulate sounds, but gave up the attempt in despair and tears.

"Poor thing! come, take a seat; you will be better after supper." And the old lady began to bustle about, and scold the servant for not bringing in the supper before it was possible.

"Take off your bonnet."

Hester obeyed; and the readiness with which this slight act was performed, together, perhaps, with the trace of crying very visible on the face, had a favourable effect on her hostess, who parted her hair on her forehead, and said, with much kindness of manner, "Your hair is the colour mine used to be—scarcely, I think, so long;—I used to be celebrated for my head of hair." And the complacency with which the elderly dame reverted to the only personal grace she had ever possessed, diffused itself over her whole manner. Hester now looked at her aunt, who was the very reverse of what she had imagined; she had always thought she would be like her father, and fancied a tall, dark, and handsome face. No such thing. Mrs. Hester Malpas was near sixty (her niece had left age quite out of her calculation), and was little, thin, harsh-featured, and of that whole sharp and shrewish appearance so often held to be the characteristic of singlehood. She was, however, very kind to her young guest—only once spoke to her rather sharply for not eating the nice supper which she had provided, observing, "that now-a-days young people were so whimsical;" adding, however, immediately afterwards, "Poor thing! I dare say you are thinking of home." She lighted Hester herself to the little room which she was henceforth to consider her own, and bade her good night; saying, "I am a very early person, but never mind about to-morrow morning—I have no doubt you will be very sleepy." And certainly Hester's head was scarcely on her pillow before she was asleep.

Never was change so complete as that which now took place in Hester's life. Nothing could be more dull, more monotonous, than her existence;—the history of one day might serve for all. They rose very early;—people who have nothing to do always make the day as long as possible:—they breakfasted—the same eternal two rolls, and a plate of thin bread and butter. After some time, Hester was intrusted with the charge of washing the

breakfast—things—a charge of no small importance, considering that her aunt regarded those small china teacups as the apple of her eye: then she read aloud the chapters and psalms of the day—then sat down to some task of interminable needlework—then dinner—then (after a few weeks' residence had convinced Mrs. Malpas that her niece required exercise and might be trusted) she was allowed to walk for two hours—then came tea—the cups were washed again—then the work-basket was resumed—and Mrs. Hester told long stories of her more juvenile days—stories which, however, differed strangely from those treasured up by most elderly gentlewomen, whose memory is most tenacious of former conquests; but the reminiscences in which Mrs. Hester delighted to indulge were of the keen bargains she had driven, and the fortunate sales which she had effected. Had she talked of her feelings, Hester, like most girls, would have listened with all the patience of interest. An unhappy attachment is irresistible to the imagination of eighteen; but with those *tender* and arithmetical recollections it was impossible for any young woman to sympathise;—however, she listened very patiently—supper came at nine—and they went to bed at ten. Sometimes a neighbour of Mrs. Malpas's own standing dropped in, and everything on the table was, if possible, found more fault with than usual. The truth was, that Mrs. Hester Malpas had the best heart and the worst temper in the world, and she made the one an excuse for the other. Hester was grateful, and thought she was content—while her constant attention to her aunt's slightest wish, the unvarying sweetness of her temper, won upon the old woman more than she would have acknowledged, even to herself. She scolded her, it is true, because she scolded every body; but she felt a really strong affection for her, which showed itself in increasing kindness to her family; and scarcely a month passed without some useful present, and which Hester had the pleasure of packing, directing, and sending off by the very coach which had brought herself to London. That dreary and terrible inn-yard was now connected with her pleasanter moments. Still this was but a weary life for a girl of nineteen, and Hester's sweet laugh grew an unfrequent sound, and her bright cheek lost its rich colour. The neighbours said that Mrs. Malpas was worry-

ing her niece to death. This was not true. Mrs. Malpas was both fond of and kind to her niece in her way, and, had she noted the alteration, would have been the first to be anxious about her; but Hester's increasing silence and gravity were rather recommendations, and as to her looking pale, why she never had had any colour herself, and she did not see why her niece should have any—colour was all very well in the country.

A year passed away unmarked by any occurrence, when, one summer afternoon, as Hester was taking her accustomed walk, she heard her name suddenly pronounced. She turned, and saw Frank Horton.

"I have been watching for you," said he, hastily drawing her arm within his, and hurrying her along, "these two hours. I was afraid you would not come out; but here you are, prettier than ever!"

Hester walked on, flurried, confused, surprised, but delighted. It was not only Frank Horton that she was glad to see, but he brought with him a whole host of all her dearest remembrances—all her happiest hours came too—she faltered half a dozen hurried questions, and all about home. Frank Horton seemed, however, more desirous to talk about herself; he was eager in his expressions, and Hester was too little accustomed to flattery not to find it sweet. She prolonged her walk to the utmost, and when they separated, she had promised, first, that she would not mention their meeting to her aunt; and, secondly, that she would meet him the following day. It was with a heavy heart Hester bent over her work that evening. One, two, three days went by, and each day she met Frank Horton; the fourth, as she entered the parlour with her bonnet on, to ask, as was her custom, if her aunt wanted anything out, "No," said Mrs. Malpas, her harsh voice raised to its highest and harshest key, "you ungrateful, deceitful girl! I know what you want to go out for: take off your bonnet this moment, for out of the house you don't stir. Your young spark won't see you for one while, I can tell him!"

Mechanically Hester obeyed: she took off her bonnet, and sat down. She knew she had done wrong, and she was far too unpractised in it to attempt a defence. Pale and trembling, she only attempted to conceal her tears. A few kind words, a tone of



gentle remonstrance, and Mrs. Malpas might have moulded her to her will; but she was too angry, and reproach after reproach was showered upon the unhappy girl, till she could bear it no longer, and she left the room. Her aunt called her back, but she did not return. This was Hester's first act of open disobedience, and the indignation it excited was proportioned to the offence. Three more miserable days made up the week;—taunts, reproaches of every kind were lavished upon her—and what she felt most keenly was, that every person who came near the house was treated with an account of her falsehood and ingratitude, till at last Mr. Lowndes, the very person who gave the information, could not help exclaiming, "Lord, Mrs. Hester! she is not the first girl who did not tell every time she went out to meet her sweetheart."

If Hester was not the first girl, it would not be her aunt's fault if she was not the last—for not one moment in the twelve hours was there a cessation from the perpetual descant on the heinousness of her offence. On the Saturday night, after she had gone into her own room, the servant-girl came up softly, and giving her a letter, said, "Come, miss, don't take on so—I am sure no good will come of mistress's parting two true lovers; but dear, she never had one of her own—and such a handsome young man—but, Lord! is that her calling?" and the girl darted off, leaving Hester the letter.

A thrill of delight lighted up her pale face as she opened the precious epistle. Under any circumstances, what happiness, what an epoch in existence is the first love-letter!—and to Hester, who would have been thankful to a stranger for one word of kindness, what must not the page have seemed whose every word was tenderness? Frank wrote to say that he knew how she had been confined to the house—that he had kept purposely out of the way—and that he entreated her to meet him as she went to church the following Sunday—that he had something very important to tell her—and that he would never ask her to meet him again. Hester wondered in her own mind whether she should be allowed to go to church—trembled at the idea of thus profaning the sabbath—half resolved to confess all to her aunt—then found her courage sink at the idea of that

aunt's severity—read the letter over again—and determined to meet him. She was late the ensuing morning, when Mrs. Hester came into her room, and exclaimed angrily, "So I suppose, as your spark has taken himself off, you do not want to go out? Please to make haste and get ready for church—I am sure you have need to pray for your sins."

Hester had not courage to reply. She dressed; and, after telling her she ought to be ashamed of making herself such a figure with crying, Mrs. Malpas dismissed both her and the servant to church. Very infirm, she herself rarely left the house, but used to read the service in the parlour, which was her sitting-room.

Trembling and miserable, Hester proceeded in the direction indicated by her lover; he was there before her,—and, with scarcely a word, she followed him hurriedly till they reached a more remote street, where, at least, neither were known. As they walked along, half Hester's attention had been given to the bell tolling for church; suddenly it ceased, and the silence smote upon her heart. Never before had she heard that bell cease but within the walls of the sacred edifice.

"Oh pray make haste—what can you have to say?—I shall be so late in church!" exclaimed she, breathless with haste and agitation.

"I shall not detain you again," replied he, in a low and broken voice. "Hester, I could not leave England without bidding you farewell, perhaps for ever!" She clung to his arm. To one who had never made but a single journey in all her life—whose idea of the world was composed of a small secluded village, and a few streets in a dull and unfrequented part of London—leaving England seemed like leaving life itself. "Yes, Hester," said her companion, gazing earnestly and sadly on her pale and anxious face, "I go on board to-day—I cannot stay here—I am off to America—I have done very wrong in renewing my acquaintance with you—but, with all my faults, I do love you, Hester, very truly and dearly. It was hard to leave my native country, and not leave one behind who would say 'God bless you!' when I left—or give me one kind thought when far away. I ask for no promise, Hester; but when I return,

altered I hope for the better in every way, you will find Hester Malpas has been my hope and my object."

She could say nothing—the surprise of this departure overwhelmed every other feeling. She walked with him in silence; she listened to his words, and felt a vague sort of satisfaction in his expressions of attachment and fidelity, but she answered only by tears. Frank was the first to see the necessity of their parting. He accompanied her back to her aunt's, and Hester let herself in, as she had the key of the back-door. He followed her into the passage—he clasped her to his heart, and turned hastily away. Hester was not aware that he was gone till she heard the door close after him; she wanted consolation—it would have been a relief to have spoken to any one—she felt half inclined to seek her aunt and confess the meeting, but her courage failed, and she hurried into her own little room, where she was soon lost in a confused reverie which blended her aunt's anger and Frank's departure together.

Leaving her to the enjoyment (as people are said to enjoy a bad state of health) of her solitary and melancholy reverie, we will follow the worthy Mr. Lowndes out of church, who, leaving his wife to hurry home about dinner, declared his intention of paying Mrs. Hester Malpas a visit. The fact was, he had missed Hester from her accustomed place in church—thought that she was still kept prisoner to the house—and considering her to have been punished quite long enough, resolved to speak a word in her favour to her aunt. He knocked at the door, but instead of being let in with that promptitude which characterised all the movements of Mrs. Hester's household, he was kept waiting; he knocked again—still no answer. At this moment, just as Mr. Lowndes' temper was giving more way than the door, the servant girl came up, who had loitered longer on her way from church, arrived, and let them in together. She threw open the parlour-door, but instantly sprung back with a scream. Mr. Lowndes advanced, but he, too, started back with an exclamation of horror. The girl caught hold of his arm, and both stood trembling for a moment, ere they mustered courage to enter that fated and fearful room. The presence of death is always awful, but death, the sudden and the violent, has a terror far beyond

common and natural fear. The poor old lady was lying with her face on the floor, and the manner of her death was instantly obvious—a violent blow on the back of the head had fractured the skull, and a dark red stain marked the clean white cap, whence the blood was slowly trickling. They raised the body, and placed it in the large arm-chair, the customary seat of the deceased. “Good God! where is Miss Hester?” exclaimed Mr. Lowndes. The servant girl ran into the passage, and called at the foot of the stairs—she had not courage to ascend them. There was at first no answer—she called again—the door of Hester’s apartment was opened slowly, and a light but hesitating step was heard. “Miss Hester, ho! Miss Hester, come down to your aunt.” Hester’s faint and broken voice answered, “Not yet, not yet—I cannot bear it.”

Fatally were these words remembered against her. That evening saw the unfortunate girl confined in a solitary cell in Newgate. We shall only give the brief outline of the evidence that first threw, and then fixed the imputation of guilt upon her. It was evident that the murderer, whoever he was, had entered by the door: true, the window was open, but had any one entered through it there must have been the trace of footsteps on the little flower-bed of the small garden in front. The house, too, had been rifled by one who appeared to know it well, while nothing but the most portable articles were taken—the few spoons, the old lady’s watch, and whatever money there might have been, for not a shilling even was to be found anywhere. A letter, however, was found from Mr. Malpas to his sister, mentioning that Frank Horton, who had long been very wild, had been forced to quit the neighbourhood in consequence of having been engaged in an affray with some gamekeepers, and it was supposed that poaching was the least crime of the gang with whom he had been connected. The epistle concluded by a hope very earnestly expressed, that if, as common report went, Frank had gone up to London, he might not meet with Hester, and begging, if he attempted to renew the acquaintance, a stop should be put to it at once. It was proved that Hester had met this young man several times in secret, the last in defiance of her aunt’s express prohibition; that instead of going to church she

had met him, and he had been seen leaving the house with all possible haste about the very time the murder had been committed, and he was traced to the river side. Two vessels had that morning sailed for America, but it was impossible to learn whether he was a passenger in either. Hester's own exclamation, too, seemed to confirm every suspicion, so did her terror, her confusion, and her bewildered manner. Every body said that she looked so guilty, and the coroner's inquest brought in a verdict for her committal.

It was a fine summer evening when Mr. Malpas and his family were seated, some in the porch of the cottage, while the younger children were scattered about the garden. There was an expression of cheerfulness in the face of the parents very different to the harsh, hard despondency of a twelvemonth since; and Hester, as her mother always prognosticated she would, had, indeed, brought a blessing on her family. Many an anxious glance was cast down the road; for, to-day, the post came in, and one of the boys had been dispatched to the village, to see if there was a letter from Hester. The child was soon discovered running at full speed, and a letter was in his hand. "It is not my sister's handwriting," said he, with the blank look of disappointment. Mr. Malpas opened the epistle, which was from Mr. Lowndes, and broke kindly, though abruptly, his daughter's dreadful situation. The unhappy father sunk back senseless in his seat, and, in care for his recovery, Mrs. Malpas had a brief respite—but she, too, had to learn the wretched truth. How that miserable day passed no words may tell. Early next morning, Mr. Malpas woke from the brief but heavy sleep of complete exhaustion; the cold grey light glared in from the window—he started from his seat, for he had never gone to bed—it was but a moment's oblivion, for the whole truth rose terrible and distinct. In such a state solitude was no relief, and he sought his wife to consult with her on the necessity of his going to London. He found only his other daughter, who had scarcely courage to tell him that her mother had already departed for town, and to give him the few scarcely legible lines which his wife had left.

The next evening, and Mrs. Malpas had found her way to the

cell of her unhappy child. All was over—she had been tried and found guilty, not of the actual murder, but of abetting and concealing it, and the following morning was the one appointed when the sentence of the law was to be carried into effect. "This is not Hester!" exclaimed Mrs. Malpas, when she entered the cell: and, even from a mother's lips, the ejaculation might be excused, so little resemblance was there between the pale emaciated creature before her, and the bright and blooming girl with whom she had parted. Hester was seated on the side of the iron bedstead—her hands clasping her knees, rocking herself to and fro, with a low monotonous moan, which would rather have seemed to indicate bodily pain than mental anguish. Her long hair—her long and beautiful brown hair, of which her mother had been so proud—hung dishevelled over her shoulders, but more than half of it was gone. Her eyes were dim and sunk in her head, and looked straight forward—with a blank, stupid expression. Her mother whispered her name—Hester made no answer; she took one of her hands—the prisoner drew it pettishly away. That live-long night the mother watched by her child—but that child never knew her again. After some time she seemed soothed by those kind and gentle caresses, but she never gave the slightest token of knowing from whom they came.

Morning arrived at last. With what loathing horror did Mrs. Malpas watch the dim grey light mark the dull outline of the grated window! The morning reddened, and as the first crimson touched Hester's face, as it rested sleeping on her mother's shoulder, somewhat of its former beauty came back to that fair young face. She slept long, though it was a disturbed and convulsive slumber. She was roused by a noise in the passage—bolt and bar fell heavily; there was the sound of many steps—strange dark faces appeared at the door. They came to take the prisoner to the place of execution! The men approached Hester—they raised her from her seat—they bound her round childish arms behind her. The mother clung to her child, but that child clung not in return. Mrs. Malpas sunk, though still retaining her hold, on the floor. With what humanity such an office permitted, they disengaged her grasp—they bore away the unresist-

ing prisoner—the door closed, and the wretched mother had looked upon her child for the last time.

It was about a twelvemonth after the execution of Hester Malpas that the family were seated again, on a fine summer evening, round the door of their cottage; but a dreadful alteration had taken place in all. The father and mother looked bowed to the very earth—the very children shrunk away if a stranger passed by. Mr. Malpas had inherited his sister's property, much more considerable than had ever been supposed; but, though necessity forced its use, he loathed it like a curse. An unusual sight now—the postman was seen approaching—he brought Mr. Malpas a newspaper. He shuddered as he took it, for he knew Mr. Lowndes's handwriting again. He opened it mechanically, and a large "read this" directed his attention to a particular paragraph. It was the confession of a Jew watch-maker, who had just been executed for burglary; and, among other crimes, he stated that he was the real murderer of Mrs. Héster Malpas, for which a young woman, her niece, had been executed. He had entered the window by means of a plank thrown from the garden railing to the casement, when, with one blow, he stunned the old lady, who was reading. Mr. Malpas went no further—the thick and blinding tears fell heavily on the paper—he could not read it aloud, but he put it into his wife's hand, with a broken ejaculation, "Thank God, she was innocent!"

\* \* The facts of the Jew committing the murder, and the old lady's niece being hanged, are perfectly true. It happened in Wapping some forty years since.

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# REQUISITES FOR A WIFE AND A HUSBAND.

BY LADY ISABELLA ST. JOHN.

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## REQUISITES FOR A WIFE.

LOVELY in her person and lively in her mind, her beauty, however transcendant, is never to excite particular, only general admiration, and her liveliness is never for an instant to be supposed to approach to levity. At the same time she must be no prude, never object to sitting hours *tête-à-tête* with a man who evidently thinks her very handsome, and must take his arm at a ball, assembly, or walk, if he offers it; and if her husband, or any one else, is inclined to cut jokes which may have a doubtful meaning, she must neither be amused nor offended.

She is to be very clean in her person, and very well dressed, but never too late at breakfast or dinner, or long at her toilette.

She must not spend much money, but be always in the fashion; if she does unfortunately get into debt, and is blamed by her husband, she must take care not to exceed her means again, but not be in the least less well-attired—or she may justly draw down her husband's ire for being a dowdy.

She is to be very simple in her diet, and hardly aware of the difference between soup and fish—yet her table is ever to be such as to excite the admiration of the most distinguished epicures of the day.

She is to be *au fait* of every passing event, but not fond of gossip.

She is to know every body, but not mix much in society.

She is to know every thing, but not be learned.



She is to have great resources in herself within doors, but their interest is never to interfere with her exercise without, even in the worst weather.

She is to like a garden, without presuming to interfere with the gardener; and to have the greatest possible interest in her husband's country-seat, without any power but that of picking a few violets in spring and a few pinks in summer.

She is to be extremely bold on horseback, though perfectly feminine; and ride remarkably well, either in the parks or the chase, though she does not get upon a horse ten times a-year.

She is never to be dull, though she must like retirement.

She is to be extremely agreeable in society, without caring for it.

If she is a mother, her children are to be highly accomplished, and dressed with infinite taste; but their governesses' wages are to be low, and their clothes to cost next to nothing.

If ill and dejected, she is to be highly pleased her husband takes that opportunity of going from home.

#### REQUISITES FOR A HUSBAND.

He is to be very fond of hunting and all manly amusements, without ever making such topics the subjects of his discourse, or even thoughts.

He is to belong to all the clubs, but never frequent them.

He is to bet with spirit at Newmarket, or in private, but never lose his money.

He is to be very fond of assemblies and balls, but not like talking or dancing.

He is to admire beauty, but never look at any woman but his wife.

He must have a very well-appointed equipage, but only consider it his own by sufferance.

He should be very domestic and attached to home, yet regard Paris as a heaven upon earth.

He should like reading aloud, without caring for books.

## THE CREMONA.

AN OXFORD-STREET REMINISCENCE.

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SOME few years ago, a shabby-looking gentleman, carrying in his hand a fiddle, enclosed in a green bag, entered the shop of an eminent hosier in Oxford-street.

"I want," said he, addressing himself to the obsequious man of hose, "a pair of silk stockings."

"Here are a dozen pair," replied the shopkeeper, "of such a quality as no other house in London can offer. They are cheaper than dirt, and more durable than iron, and when they are worn out, they will cut down into capital socks; but that will not be for many years".

"Excellent qualities!" replied the shabby gentleman, with the fiddle; "but what is the price?"

"A trifle," returned the seller; "only twelve shillings a pair."

"Then put up one pair for me," said he of the green bag, "and I'll pay for them." At the same moment his right hand dived into the extreme recesses of his breeches pocket, as though he were endeavouring to select something underneath. He was not successful.

"Gracious Heavens!" cried he, "I have either lost my purse, or left it at home, and I know not how I can possibly do without the stockings; for you must understand, that I am going to play at a celebrated concert to-night, and must have them to wear."

"Well, sir," replied the hosier, "that shall not trouble you; we'll send them to your house."

"Unfortunately," whimpered the man of sweet sounds, screwing up his features to the dimension of a dried codling, "I am not going home; but I will, by your kind permission, leave my fiddle as a security for the twelve shillings, only requesting that you be careful of it, and hang it up (for it is a valuable instrument), on that nail, which I see disengaged over the chimney of your back parlour."

"With all my heart," replied the hosier; and immediately conducted the musician into the parlour, where he hung up the fiddle, and having received the stockings, left the shop.

About two days after this event, a person entered the shop, and bought two or three trifling articles. Being suddenly seized with a spasmodic indisposition of stomach, he requested permission to recover himself in an arm-chair of the parlour. The hosier's humanity and civility were equal to his industry. He attended his customer with much assiduity, and by help of a little brandy, rubbing, and chafing, restored the gentleman. As soon as he was well, he began to look about the room; to admire the pictures; to compliment the hosier on his taste—when his eyes rested on the fiddle.

"What! my friend," he exclaimed, "are you a musician?"

"No, sir," said the hosier; "that fiddle belongs to a poor fellow who bought a pair of stockings of me two days back, and probably has not yet been able to raise money enough to pay for them, and redeem his fiddle."

"Allow me," said the gentleman, "to look at it—I am a judge of these matters." The fiddle being delivered to him, he drew it from the bag, and having examined it said, as though to himself, "This is really a prodigious fine fiddle!" He then placed it to his shoulder, and negligently passing the bow across the strings, produced a few notes, which appeared to the hosier of such exquisite delicacy, that the passion of gain was for a few seconds suspended.

"This fiddle," said the stranger, "appears to be a Cremona, of the best tune.—Mr. Nottingham," he continued, looking up at the hosier, "I have known you some years, and have dealt always with you—I know you are an honest man—I will not inform you what is my opinion of the worth of this instrument;

but here is a thirty pound note, for which you will give me a receipt; and if, when the wretched musician again makes his appearance, you can purchase it for fifty pounds, this note, which I have now put into your hands, shall be your own." When he had thus spoken, he gave him the note, together with his card; and having received an acknowledgment for the note, departed.

He had scarcely been gone from the shop above an hour, when the musician, in a great hurry, and much worse clothed than before, ran hastily into the shop, and, putting down the twelve shillings on the counter, requested to have his fiddle.

"Ah," quoth the man of yarn, "I'm delighted to see you, I wish to have a few moments' conversation with you;" and, taking him into the back parlour, informed him of the liberal offer which the gentleman had made who had been there in the morning.

"With respect to the fiddle," said the musician, "I am well aware that it even exceeds in value what you have offered; nor would I think of selling it, but that my distresses are great, and customers are difficult to procure. To tell you the truth, I am now under arrest, an officer is with me outside, and I have only been allowed a few moments to fetch my fiddle, in order to carry it to a friend, who is ready to advance me upon it a sum of money sufficient to relieve me from arrest." The hosier saw that such was the fact.

"I will go with you," said he, "to the gentleman's house, and receive the fifty."—"Impossible!" replied the musician. "He may be from home, or otherwise; I cannot take the risk. The person I allude to is waiting my return."

The wily hosier now began to suspect that the fiddle would escape, and that the thirty pounds' commission would be lost. He therefore resolved on a bold venture, and added twenty pounds of his own.

"Wait one moment," said he to the musician, "and you shall receive the fifty pounds." The musician hesitated, as if reluctant to part with his fiddle for the price: he surveyed it with tenderness, and said, "'Tis my necessities alone which induce me to part with thee, thou cheerful companion of my life

—the better portion of my existence ! But we must separate ; and having been a long time the delight of thy master, thou must now become his support.”

Tears were visible in the eyes of the wretched musician, and, with a trembling hand, he delivered the instrument to the hosier, and having received the fifty pounds, hurried away from the shop in a very distressed state of mind. The hosier almost repented making such a gain from so poor a man. But “ business is business.”

As soon as the fiddle became the property of the hosier, he ordered a coach, and repaired to the house of the gentleman whose card he possessed. The servants informed him that their master was at home, and he was soon introduced into the library. He found himself in the presence of a gentleman very different in appearance from him whom he had seen in the morning. However, he produced the fiddle, a receipt for the money he had paid, and the card, and begged to know when he could see the owner. The gentleman appeared surprised, and, indeed, the man of stockings very soon became convinced that there must be some mistake. The gentleman acknowledged the card to be his, but declared himself quite ignorant of the transaction. The hosier was struck with dismay, and returned home in a most disconsolate state, yet not without hopes that the person who had advanced the money would soon make his appearance to claim the fiddle he had so much coveted. At all events, the instrument was valuable, and he might, after all, make a handsome profit. He was relieved from all suspense by the arrival of a customer, who was a musical instrument maker ; who, having examined the instrument, declared it to be a Dutch fiddle, value about eighteen and sixpence ! The sound of a fiddle, ever after, threw the hosier into fits !

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## HINTS TO SPORTSMEN.

BY CAPTAIN CRAM, H. P. R. H. M.

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I DETEST popping at partridges, and should consider it a disgrace to gallop after even the most stinking fox that ever was cubbed: let it stink ever so attractively to the sense of a British sportsman, it has no charms for me. No; I have been accustomed to a more extensive field; I have hunted elephants and bagged buffaloes; my taste, therefore, for such "small deer" as Britain boasts, has dwindled into contempt. Time was, however, when I was a great man in the "small way." Few could boast of more extraordinary leaps; and as to bagging game—it is no use to mince the matter—I was a devil of a shot! I could relate some anecdotes of sporting in those days which would amuse as well as astonish you,—but my object is now to be serious.

During my experience in foreign countries, I have been taught the fallacy of many received rules in sporting, which are here followed with implicit faith. As a sincere and general reformer, I wish much to alter all these, although I anticipate the difficulty; for England is so wedded to prejudices and old customs, that it is lucky for us our forefathers did not practise walking upon their heads in a general way, or we should certainly have contended for the propriety of it. However, I think the advantage of adopting my new rules will be so self-evident, that the most bigoted Tory sportsman will hardly refuse to conform. In the first place, then, contrary to the received maxim—

Rule 1.—*Always load your gun when on the cock*, by which you lose no time in bringing your piece to the shoulder, a great

advantage; and if you possess *common caution*, you run no risk of blowing your head off while ramming down your charge.

Rule 2.—*When a covey gets up, always fire bang into the middle of it.*—It is all nonsense about singling out a particular bird; take my word, it is easier to miss one bird than to miss a dozen.

Rule 3.—*When you are very desirous of game, instead of shot, fire your ramrod.*—By this plan you may spit three brace at one shot. I have known it done.

Rule 4.—*When you scramble through a hedge, by all means let your gun be at the full cock.*—Caution should be the characteristic of a good sportsman; if you shoot your friend, you will be cautious for life.

Rule 5.—*If a single bird gets up on your friend's side, shoot at it by all means.*—The old system is only to fire at those on your own side, which I hold to be a losing game; for if your friend brings down his bird, *he bags it*; whereas, if you fire also, you have the benefit of the doubt, which is settled by tossing up. Never mind the old gag of it being unfair—the *ardour* of a sportsman is a good excuse.

Rule 6.—*When you meet with a hare on her form, kill it if you can.*—It is all stuff about being *unsportsmanlike*—don't attend to such rubbish. My advice is, *fill your bag*.

Rule 7.—*Never brag of being a good shot.*—Hold this as a maxim; if, for example, you have leave to shoot over a gentleman's grounds, and are successful, which you are pretty sure to be, if you follow my rules, and are anything of a shot, send your man home with the game, then call at the house, and leave a brace of birds, being the *whole contents of your bag*—you will be condoled with, and have unlimited leave to shoot.

Rule 8.—*When you enter a field, helloo and bawl as loud as you can.*—It will save you much trouble, for you will see at once whether there are any birds there.

Rule 9.—*Always train your dog to chop his bird from each covey.*—With a good brace of dogs, so trained, and a double-barrelled gun, I would bag more game than any man in England.

Rule 10.—*Choose your dogs of the highest possible courage.*

—By this precaution you can gratify yourself by thrashing your dog whenever you miss, without fear of spoiling him.

Rule 11.—*The instant a pheasant rises, blaze away at him.*—My reason for this innovation is, that if you miss, you will have time to pitch your hat at him.

Rule 12.—*Never omit to prime your piece.*—This is a most important point, and involves consequences not at first apparent. I once remember, in ancient days, to have accompanied two gentlemen from the land of Cockayne, on a shooting excursion; one was the head clerk at Cox and Greenwood's, the army agents, and the other belonged to Dolan's house, the army tailor. They were both pupils of mine, though, from want of practice, they had made but indifferent progress. Well, up got a fine cock pheasant, and, according to my system, both pieces were levelled, and down came the bird, though, I verily believe, such was the eagerness of both sportsmen to have the start, that neither had time to bring his gun to his shoulder. Then came on the dispute; the tailor swore he covered the bird, while the other declared he could tell the spot where he touched him. It was referred to me, and, without tossing up, I gave it against the tailor. The fact was, that I did not carry a gun that day, thinking I should have enough to do to take care of myself, which, indeed, the sequel proved, for I went home minus the skirt of my coat; I was, therefore, the better enabled to watch the proceedings. The tailor demurred at my promptness, and proposed the toss; I, however, referred him to the pan of his piece, which, on examination, he found he had forgotten to *prime*! He lost his chance of his friend's bird: therefore, I would say, however you manage about the charge, *never forget the priming*.

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## THE STORY OF HELEN GILLET.

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*"Le vrai n'est pas toujours le vraisemblable."*

It would probably be difficult to find, in the whole course of human events, a more striking illustration of the truth of the above motto than the following history of Helen Gillet, a young lady of Burgundy, who was tried for infanticide, and condemned to be decapitated, in the early part of the seventeenth century. The mixture of the extraordinary, the marvellous, and the horrible in this "o'er-true tale" would, if detailed in a work of fiction, be considered as evincing a want of tact in the writer, from the apparent improbability and aggravated horror of the events, which surpass, in their frightful reality, anything that the author of "Melmoth" has, in the wildest debauch of his terror-loving imagination, given birth to. And yet not one of the facts, hereinafter related, but has been faithfully and literally copied from the judicial records of the court before which the trial took place, and from the municipal archives of the city of Dijon, in which were transcribed the official reports of the extraordinary circumstances that occurred at the place of execution. It will surprise, if not interest, the English reader to learn that the said story of Helen Gillet is connected, by a singular coincidence, with a remarkable event in the life of the ill-fated Charles I. of England. The source from whence we have drawn the principal facts of this harrowing narrative is a book written by an

advocate of the bar of Dijon, (1) and of which but a very few copies were printed. Upon one of these, by a fortunate chance, we happened to lay our hand. The documents which furnished the author of this book with the facts detailed in it, he found in the eleventh volume of the old "*Mercure François de Richer et Renaudat*," in "*La Vie de l'Abbesse de Notre Dame du Tart, Madame Courcelle de Pourlans*," (2) and in the authentic archives of the *Chambre des Comptes*, and of the *Mairie* of Dijon. From the incontestible truth and authenticity of these sources, it is evident that no narration of past events can rest upon more solid and incontrovertible proofs than do the principal and almost incredible facts of the tragical history of Helen Gillet.

In the year 1624, the *châtelain*, or royal judge, who presided over Bourg-en-Bresse, a little town situated within view of Mount Jura, was Pierre Gillet, a man of noble extraction, upright conduct, austere manners, and unblemished reputation. Pierre Gillet was blessed with an only daughter, named Helen, aged twenty-two, who was equally admired for the beauty of her person and the graces of her mind, as she was respected for the virtue and piety of her conduct. Helen was seldom seen at any place of public resort except the church; and yet there the eye of abandoned and daring profligacy sought her out and marked her for its victim. An individual of violent and reckless passions, unfortunately for poor Helen Gillet, became enamoured of her; and, to obtain the object of his desires, contrived to gain admission into her father's house, under the guise of an instructor of her brothers. But being soon convinced, by the purity and unaffected reserve of Helen, of the impossibility of accomplishing his design by the usual arts of seduction, he had recourse to the treacherous collusion of a vile servant-woman, and to the atrocious and dastardly expedient of a narcotic draught, to achieve the ruin and disgrace of the hapless girl.

This event left no other traces in the mind of Helen Gillet

(1) *Histoire d'Hélène Gillet, ou Relation d'un événement extraordinaire et tragique survenu à Dijon dans le dix-septième siècle. Par un ancien Avocat. Dijon, 1829. 8vo. 72 pages.*

(2) *Par Edme-Bernard Bourrée, Oratoirien. Lyon, 1699. 8vo, 541 pages.*

than a vague stupor, and, to her, unaccountable melancholy, unaccompanied with either remorse or dread—

“She fear’d no danger, for she knew no sin.”

But after the lapse of some time, the sly looks and whispers of the groups she passed on her way to and from church,—the coarse laughter and ribald jests of the young men she chanced to meet,—the fixed and scrutinizing gaze with which the elder and married women regarded her shape, followed by shrugs and up-turned eyes, expressing half pity, half scorn—and the daily falling off of her younger female acquaintance, even including her dearest and most intimate friends, gradually forced upon the conviction of the poor girl that her reputation was suffering under some unknown but terrible taint, and that society rejected her as a worthless and forlorn creature. In a short time but one friend alone in the world remained to her, and in the bosom of that friend—her mother—she hid her face to weep, but not to unburthen her mind, for she had no guilty secret to disclose.

In regard to the birth of the child, of the compassing whose death Helen Gillet was accused, much and inextricable mystery prevailed. In her various examinations, and on her trial, she constantly asserted her ignorance of having ever given birth to a child. She, however, confessed that some time after she had been betrayed by the treachery of a female servant to the brutality of her ravisher, an accident had happened to her which she communicated to a woman in her father’s service, who told her that she had experienced a miscarriage. Another account, relative to the child, circulated amongst the people of Bourg-en-Bresse, to the effect, that on the night of Helen’s accouchement the only person present was her mother; that Helen was buried in the profound sleep of exhausted nature, whilst her mother, tired out with watching, was in a middle state between slumber and waking, when, towards the break of day, she saw a man enter the chamber, approach the bed, from which he snatched the new-born babe, (for no cradle had been provided for this clandestine accouchement,) and, after wrapping it in the first article of dress that came under his hand, and imprinting a hurried kiss on the brow of its sleeping mother,

rushed from the apartment before Madame Gillet, who witnessed, with a kind of dreamy uncertainty, this extraordinary apparition, could recover from her surprise and horror sufficiently to give an alarm (if, under the peculiar circumstances, she had dared to do so), or prevent his departure. This man was supposed to have been the person who had acted for a short time as tutor to the sons of Pierre Gillet, since a person resembling him had been observed anxiously on the watch about the house of the *châtelain* for some days previous to the *accouchement*, and was never seen afterwards in the country.

However true or false this account may be, the reappearance of Helen Gillet, accompanied by her mother, at church, with the traces of recent suffering, both mental and bodily, on her features, and the recovered slenderness of her shape, gave rise to surmises and rumours of so serious an import, that the magistrates thought their duty called upon them to take cognizance of the affair, and Helen Gillet was in consequence subjected to the visit of a jury of matrons, whose report affirmed that she had given birth to a child some fifteen days previously to the said inquiry. The unfortunate young lady was thrown into prison, and criminal proceedings were commenced against her; but, from the circumstance of there being no *corpus delicti* in evidence, (the body of the child not having been found,) the Judges were in doubt how to proceed, when the following occurrence relieved them from the dilemma. A soldier, who was walking in the fields close to the town, was struck by the action of a raven, which, darting from a tree to the ground close to the foot of a wall, began tearing up the earth with its bill and claws, and then flew back into the tree, bearing in its bill a fragment of discoloured or bloody linen. The soldier ran to the spot, turned up the earth with the point of his sabre, and discovered the body of an infant enveloped in a chemise, upon one of the corners of which were the initials H. G. ! This fact being made known to the Judges, the proceedings were resumed, and, on the 6th of February, 1625, Helen Gillet was found guilty of the murder of her child, and condemned to be beheaded (she being of noble blood) instead of being strangled, as would have been the punishment for one of inferior condition.

On the day of execution poor Helen Gillet walked between two Jesuits and two Capuchin monks, each of whom, in turn, held towards her a crucifix, which she kissed with devout fervour. Never had she appeared so affectingly beautiful: her dress was spotless white; her long and beautiful raven-dark hair had not as yet been cut off, but was gathered up on the crown of her head, where it was confined by a ribbon. Soon after the commencement of the procession to the scaffold, the ribbon became partially loosened, so that a great portion of Helen's hair slipped from the knot, and fell in graceful and undulating disorder upon her left shoulder, thereby completely concealing from view the ignominious halter that had been placed round her neck. In this some saw only a trifling accident, while others thought they beheld in it the finger of God, thus covering and hiding from the sight the disgraceful addition superadded to the punishment by the Parliament of Dijon. This circumstance of the falling down of the hair led to results of infinitely more serious import than the concealing of the halter, as will be seen in the sequel.

The place of execution at Dijon, to which Helen Gillet was proceeding, was appropriately called the *Morimont*, or the Mount of Death. In the midst of this place stood the scaffold, hung with black cloth; it was constructed of wood, having a flight of eight steps, and was elevated upon a basement of masonry-work, to which there was an ascent of four steps. All round this structure, at the distance of fifteen or twenty feet, rose a barrier of strong wooden posts and planks to keep off the crowd. Within this barrier, and close to the scaffold, was seated the King's Procurator-General, attended by his *huissiers d'honneur*; here also were some Jesuits and Capuchin monks, occupied in praying for the soul that was about to pass. Within the enclosure, but close to the barrier, were circulating, with slow and solemn steps, six black penitents, (1) whose appearance was startlingly spectral, from their forms and faces being entirely

(1) A self-constituted confraternity of laymen, who make it a duty to attend criminals to execution in a hideous and appalling masquerade dress. Some of these confraternities are still kept up, and play their lugubrious pranks, in the South of France.

enveloped in long sable robes, the only features visible being their eyes, which glared upon the spectators from two small holes in each of the pointed hoods which covered their heads. With bare feet, lighted torches in their hands, and a hempen rope round their bodies, these frightful-looking figures went chanting the death-dirge of the poor sufferer, and begging alms in sepulchral and hollow tones for the benefit of the souls in purgatory. Within the wooden barrier was also a little brick building, in which the executioner kept his manacles, cords, flesh-tearing pincers, portable furnace, branding and limb-breaking irons, and all the other inhuman paraphernalia of his hideous ministry. One part of this storehouse of torture was fitted up as an oratory, and served as a *succursale*, or chapel of *ease*! dependent upon the bloody temple of the scaffold. It was specifically called *La Chapelle*, and into it were led to pray those hardened criminals who, having resisted all the ghostly exhortations wasted upon them in the prison, could only be brought to some sense of their awful situation by the sight of the instruments of their death.

An increased noise and agitation amongst the crowd, and every eye turned in one direction, announced that the sad procession had reached the *Morimont*. Helen Gillet alone ascended the scaffold, and took her station near the block, her eyes raised to Heaven, and her heart, to judge from her apparent serenity, firmly relying upon the justice and mercy of God. For several minutes she remained alone upon the scaffold, "the observed of all observers," for Simon Grandjean, the executioner, had not yet appeared. He had remained behind, praying in the chapel of the prison, where he had taken the sacrament that morning. He at length entered the barrier, accompanied by *la bourrelle*, that is, his wife, or, not to profane the holy name of wife, the female of the *bourreau*, who, on important occasions, aided him in his horrible functions. The executioner was armed with a short, broad-bladed, and heavy-backed sword—the *bourrelle* held in one of her hands a long pair of scissors, to cut off the hair of the sufferer. This woman, who seemed to be actuated by the cruelty of a fiend, hurried up the steps of the scaffold, brandishing the scissors above her head; and yet, when she

stood by the side of the victim, she seemed, through some unaccountable cause, to have forgotten the purpose for which she had brought the scissors, so that the beautiful hair of poor Helen Gillet remained unpolluted by the touch of this female demon. At this moment Simon Grandjean advanced to the front of the scaffold, and making a sign to the crowd that he wished to address them, (a circumstance unheard-of in the history of judicial executions,) the hoarse murmur of the multitude was instantly hushed into a death-like silence. The executioner at that instant appeared an object of pity rather than of horror; for, pale and enfeebled from sickness, and emaciated and hollow-eyed from the macerations and fleshly mortifications which he had voluntarily undergone, in order to prepare himself for the fulfilment of his terrible ministry, he was scarcely able to stand upright, and leaned for support on the sword, the point of which he held against the ground. It was evident to all that a fierce struggle was going on in his mind, between his duty and compassion for the young and beautiful creature that was awaiting death at his hands. At length, with fear and trembling, he exclaimed—

“Mercy! mercy for me! Your blessing, reverend fathers! Pardon me, men of Dijon, if I should fail in my duty, for it is now more than three months that I have been grievously sick and afflicted in body. I have never yet cut off a head, and the Lord God refuses me sufficient strength to kill this young creature! Upon my faith as a Christian, I feel that I cannot kill her!”

As prompt as the lightning’s flash was the reply of the crowd—“Kill! kill!” roared out the savage populace.

“Do your duty,” said the King’s procurator-general; but this mild expression, pronounced with seriousness and dignity, conveyed the same cruel meaning as the inhuman roar of the multitude—“Kill! kill!”

Simon Grandjean then, with tottering steps, and his eyes filled with tears, approached Helen Gillet, and, throwing himself at her feet, and presenting her the handle of the sword, said, “Noble young lady, kill me or pardon me!”

“I pardon and bless you,” replied Helen, as she knelt down, and laid her head upon the block.



The executioner, now excited by the *bourrelle*, who overwhelmed him with reproaches, could no longer defer striking the blow. He raised his arm—a deep drawing-in of the breath by the multitude was distinctly heard—the priests and the penitents exclaimed **JESUS MARIA!** the bright blade gleamed like a lightning-flash in the air, and then descended upon the neck of the sufferer. But Helen's long hair, which, as has been already mentioned, had fallen down over her shoulders, turned aside the force of the blow, and the sword cut deep into her left shoulder. In her anguish she turned over on her right side, while the executioner, after dropping the sword, went to the edge of the scaffold, and called out to the crowd to put him to death.

Already a furious clamour began to rise from the multitude, whose sanguinary impatience had now changed its object, and turned into rage against the unskilfulness of the executioner, mingled with pity for the tortured victim. Some of the populace had already commenced throwing stones at the executioner, when the *bourrelle*, taking up the sword, sought to fix it firmly in his hands. While she was thus employed, poor Helen Gillet raised herself, and again laid her head, with her hair all dabbled in blood, upon the block. The wretched executioner, now still more confused by the horror of his situation, made another ill-directed blow, which at first took effect upon the head of the sufferer, from which, after inflicting a deep gash, it descended upon her neck, entering it not more than a finger's breadth. Again the tortured girl turned over, and, rolling upon the floor, covered with her body the sword (another providential circumstance) which the executioner had thrown down after striking the blow. The fury of the multitude now rose beyond all control; and the executioner, to escape it, jumped from the scaffold, and ran for shelter to the little *chapelle* already described, whither he was followed by the Jesuits, the Capuchin monks, and the Penitents, as the populace had commenced pulling down the barrier; and stones, no respecters of persons, were beginning to fly from all quarters, accompanied by the cries of "*Save the sufferer, and kill the executioner!*" The masons who were among the crowd advanced to demolish the little *chapelle*, the door of which had been shut and barricaded inside; and the members

of the merciful company of butchers, who were present, followed close behind, determined and ready to slaughter the man of blood (1).

The monks and holy fathers, who had shut themselves up with the executioner in the little *chapelle*; fearing by a protracted resistance to draw the fury of the multitude upon their sacred persons, opened the doors, and issued forth chanting the hymn for the dead, as if they were going to their own execution, and holding out their crucifixes as if to conjure and ward off the showers of stones that were falling about them. In this guise they crossed the square of the *Morimont*, not without receiving on their bare and shaven heads some of the many missiles that were hurtling in the air above them. Before they had half traversed the square, they heard the dying shriek of the wretched Simon Grandjean, who had been torn by the infuriated populace from the altar of the little chapel, dragged forth into the light and air, for the purpose of being instantly deprived of both, and put to death in a thousand different ways—by a thousand various wounds and weapons.

Whilst this popular tragedy was being performed close to the chapel, a still more atrocious scene of hellish cruelty was being perpetrated on the scaffold, where poor Helen Gillet was left alone with the *bourrelle*. This fiend, in the shape of a woman, not seeing the sword, which was concealed by Helen's having fallen upon it, took the rope which she had round her neck whilst coming to the place of execution, and again placed it round the sufferer's throat, and tightened it. The unfortunate girl, recovering her senses at the moment, raised her hands, and seized the rope, when her inhuman tormentor kicked her brutally and repeatedly in the bosom and stomach, trampled on her hands, and, drawing her up by the rope, shook her violently five or six times, hoping in that way to strangle her. In this she would

(1) These circumstances are not imaginary ones, but are expressly mentioned in the *procès verbal*, or official account of the affair, which was drawn up four days after its occurrence, in the council-chamber of the city of Dijon, and which bears the signature of the *échevin* Bossuet, the father of that brightest ornament of the French church, the eloquent Bishop of Meaux.

most probably have succeeded, but, finding herself at the instant assailed by a shower of stones from the multitude, she dragged by the rope around its neck the half inanimate body across the scaffold, and down the eight steps—the late beautiful features now livid and distorted from pain and strangulation, the once finely-formed head now gashed with horrid wounds, and the once flowing and glossy raven-black hair now a hideously matted and discoloured mass, thick with clotted blood, and gore, and saw-dust!

On reaching the stone basement upon which the scaffold stood, the *bourrelle* suddenly recollected the pair of scissors which she had brought with her to cut off the culprit's hair; and, as if excited to still more frenzied cruelty by the remembrance, she drew them from her girdle, and endeavoured to cut the throat of her victim with them; but failing in this, she plunged them repeatedly into the face, and neck, and bosom of the hapless girl.

The wretch would have certainly, and soon, completed her murderous design, had not, at the moment, two men, who had scaled the barrier, rushed upon her, and rescued poor Helen from her fiendish hands. They took the rope from her neck, and, making a kind of *brancard*, or litter, of their arms crossed, carried her towards the house of a surgeon named Nicholas Jacquin. They had not proceeded far with her, when, coming a little to herself, she complained of a burning thirst, and asked for a little water, which being given her, she said, finding her spirits return, "I knew well that God would assist me."

As the saviours of Helen Gillet were bearing her away, the crowd, getting over the barrier on all sides, rushed upon the *bourrelle*, and soon reduced her vile body, by innumerable blows of stones, hammers, knives, and poniards, to a hideous and formless mass of bruised and mutilated flesh, and gore, and shattered bones.

At the house of the surgeon Jacquin (whose descendants, and of the same name, still exercise the same profession in Burgundy), Helen had her wounds visited, after permission had been asked of the municipal authorities. Besides the two inflicted by the sword of the executioner, she had six stabs of scissors;—one which passed between the windpipe and the jugular vein; and

other through the under lip, and by which the tongue and palate were lacerated; one above the breast, which pierced nearly to the back-bone; two deep gashes in the head, and several wounds from stones; and a deep incision across the loins, made by the sword upon which she had fallen. Besides these, her neck and bosom were cruelly bruised and lacerated by the kicks which the *bourrelle* had given her. Whilst they were dressing her wounds, she asked if these were to be the end of her sufferings. She was told to be of good courage; that God and her judges would take her part; that during the fifteen days of vacation upon which the Parliament of Dijon was then entering, she would have time to petition the King; and that there was little doubt that, after learning the unexampled sufferings she had undergone, his Majesty would pardon her.

Whilst this scene was passing in the house of Nicholas Jacquin, the surgeon, (who was soon able to pronounce that none of the wounds of his poor patient, though serious, were mortal,) her wretched mother was stretched on the floor of the Chapel of Sister Frances du Saint Esprit, in the stupor of despair. She was roused by the voice of the venerable nun exclaiming, "'Tis well! 'tis well! All is over! There are the people returning joyfully from the place of execution, for the young and the innocent has not perished."

We shall leave it to the imagination of our readers to depict the meeting between this devoted mother and her beloved daughter, thus miraculously restored to her from the bloody embraces of the most hideous death. But even the joys of this reunion were dashed with bitterness, flowing from the uncertainty which hung over the fate of Helen Gillet, she being still liable to the doom of death pronounced upon her; so that the interval—between the forwarding of her memorial for mercy and the return of the messenger that brought the answer—was a continued agony of terror and suspense for both mother and daughter.

To the other singular coincidences which concurred to rescue poor Helen Gillet from her dreadful fate may be added the circumstance of the day of her execution having been fixed for the eve of the Catholic festival of the Rogation Days, when com-

menced a vacation of fifteen days for the parliaments and high courts of justice; so that, by the massacre of Simon Grandjean, the functions of the public executioner remained in abeyance during that period, as no successor to him in that odious office could be appointed until the parliament again met. In this interval a memorial in favour of Helen Gillet was drawn up and signed by many persons of the highest rank and most exemplary piety in Dijon.

Powerfully calculated as were the peculiarities of Helen Gillet's case to awake compassion in the royal breast, considerable doubts were entertained as to its success. Louis XIII., the then reigning monarch of France, on whom his flatterers have bestowed the epithet of *Just*, was fonder of wielding the sword of justice than exercising that still more divine prerogative of the crown—mercy. On this occasion, however, he chose the brighter path of his duty, and in due time royal letters of full grace and pardon for Helen Gillet arrived at Dijon. These letters were solemnly received and registered by the Parliament of Dijon, and still exist in the archives of that city. It appears by these letters patent, that one of the causes why the life of Helen Gillet was spared, was to do honour, by an act of signal grace and mercy, to the marriage of the sister of the King of France with Charles I. of England.

The news of the pardon granted to poor Helen Gillet spread universal satisfaction through the city of Dijon; and on Monday, the 2d day of June, 1625, the advocate, Charles Fevret, after a long speech in reference to the occasion, presented to the Parliament of Dijon the royal letters of grace and pardon, for the purpose of being solemnly enregistered.

After so unexampled and sad an experience of the troubles and dangers of the every-day world, poor Helen thought, and wisely, that her proper place was no longer in it: she therefore resolved on devoting herself entirely to God, and for that purpose entered a convent at Bresse, took the vows and the veil, and there lived a long, long life of peace, and prayer, and thanksgiving; for, in 1699, when Father Bourrée, of the *Oratoire*, published his "*Histoire de la Mère Jeanne de Saint Joseph, Madame Courcelle de Pourlians*," (Abbess of *Notre Dame du Tart*, and a

relation of Helen Gillet), he mentions that the latter had departed this life but a short time before; so that she must have been at least ninety years of age.

It thus appears that Helen Gillet, who was to have been decapitated on the very day that Charles I. of England was married to the sister of the King of France, lived, nevertheless, for half a century after a more steady hand than that of Simon Grandjean, the executioner of Dijon, had stricken off the head of the ill-fated monarch in honour of whose happy marriage her life had been spared. Such are the strange events of life, and the inscrutable dispensations of Providence!

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## THE BARONET'S BRIDE.

FROM THE DIARY OF A LATE PHYSICIAN.

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NEVER was man married under more auspicious circumstances than Sir Henry Harleigh. Himself the descendant of an ancient house, and the accomplished possessor of a splendid fortune; his bride the fairest flower in the family of a distinguished nobleman; surely here were elements of high happiness, warranting the congratulations of the "troops of friends" who, by their presence, added *éclat* to the imposing nuptials. "Heaven bless thee, sweet Anne!" sobbed the venerable peer, her father, folding his daughter in his arms, as Sir Henry advanced to conduct her to his travelling-chariot; "may these be the last tears thou wilt have occasion to shed!" The blushing, trembling girl could make no reply; and linking her arm in that of her handsome husband, dizzy with agitation, and almost insensible of the many hands that shook hers in passing, suffered him to lead her through the throng of guests above, and lines of befavoured lacqueys below, to the chariot waiting to conduct "the happy pair" to a romantic residence of Sir Henry's in Wales. The moment they were seated, the steps were shut up—the door closed. Sir Henry hastily waved a final adieu to the company thronging the windows of the drawing-room he had just quitted; the postillions cracked their whips, and away dashed the chariot, and four, amidst the cheery pealing of the bells—

———"bearing its precious throbbing charge  
To halcyon climes afar."

Sir Henry's character contrasted strongly, in some respects,



with that of his lady. His urbanity was tinged with a certain reserve, or rather melancholy, which some considered the effect of an early and severe devotion to study; others, and perhaps more truly, of a constitutional tendency inherited from his mother. There was much subdued energy in his character; and you could not fail, under all his calmness of demeanour, to observe the strugglings of talent and ambition. Lady Anne, on the contrary, was all sprightliness and frolic. 'Twas like a sunbeam and a cloud brought together; the one, in short, "L'Allegro;" the other, "Il Penseroso." The qualities of each were calculated to attemper those of the other, alternately instigating and brightening; and who would not predicate a happy harmonious union of *such* extremes?

Six months after their marriage, the still "happy couple" returned to town, after having traversed an extensive portion of the Continent. Lady Anne looked lovelier, and her spirits were more buoyant and brilliant than ever. She had apparently transfused not a little of her vivacity into her husband's more tranquil temperament: his manners exhibited a briskness and joyousness which none of his friends had ever witnessed in him before. During the whole of the London "season," Lady Anne revelled in enjoyment; the idol of her husband—the centre of gaiety and cheerfulness—the star of fashion. Her *début* at Court was the most flattering of the day. It was generally talked of, that the languid elegance, the listless fastidiousness of royalty, had been quickened into something like an appearance of interest, as the fair bride bowed before it, in the graceful attitude of loyal duty. Once or twice I had the satisfaction of meeting with her Ladyship in public—all charming vivacity—all sparkle—followed by crowds of flatterers—till one would have thought her nearly intoxicated with their fragrant incense!

In due time Sir Henry completed the extensive arrangements for his town residence; and by the beginning of the ensuing winter, Lady Anne found herself at the head of as noble an establishment as her heart could desire. The obsequious morning prints soon teemed with accounts of his dinners; and of the balls, routs, *soirées*, and *conversazioni* given by this new "queen of the evening hour." Sir Henry, who represented his

county in Parliament, and consequently had many calls upon his time—for he was rather disposed to be a “working” member—let his lady have it all her own way. He mingled but little in her gaieties; and when he did, it was evident that his thoughts were elsewhere—that he rather tolerated than enjoyed them. He soon settled into the habitudes of the man of *political* fashion, seldom deviating from the track, with all its absorbing associations, bounded by the House and the Clubs;—those sunken rocks of many a woman’s domestic happiness! In short, Sir Henry—man of fashion as he was—was somewhat of a character, and was given ample credit for sporting “the eccentric.” His manners were marked by a dignity that often froze into hauteur, and sometimes degenerated into almost surly abruptness; which, however, was easily carried to the account of severe political application and abstraction. Towards his beautiful wife, however, he preserved a demeanour of uniform tenderness. She could not form a wish that he did not even personally endeavour to secure her the means of gratifying. Considering the number and importance of his public engagements, many wondered that he could contrive to be so often seen accompanying her in rides and drives about the Park and elsewhere; but who could name

“The sacrifice affection would not yield!”

Some there were, however, who ere long imagined they detected a moodiness—an irritability—a restlessness—of which his political engagements afforded no sufficient explanation. They spoke of his sudden fits of absence, and the agitation he displayed on being startled from them. What could there be to disturb him? was he running beyond his income to supply his lady’s extravagance? was he offended at any lightness or indiscretion of which she might have been guilty? had he given credence to any of the hundred tales circulated in society of every woman eminent in the *haut ton*? was he embarrassed with the consequences of some deep political move? No one could tell; but many marked the increasing indications of his dissatisfaction and depression. Observation soon fastened her keen eyes upon Lady Anne, and detected occasional clouds upon her ge-

nerally joyous countenance. Her bright eye was often laden with anxiety; the colour of her cheek varied; the blandness and cheerfulness of her manner gave place to frequent abruptness, petulance, and absence: symptoms, these, which soon set her friends sympathizing, and her acquaintance speculating. Whenever this sort of inquiry is aroused, charity falls asleep. She never seemed at ease, it was said, in her husband's presence—his departure seemed the signal for her returning gaiety. Strange to say, each seemed the conscious source of the other's anxiety and apprehension. Each had been detected casting furtive glances at the other—tracking one another's motions, and listening, even, to one another's conversation; and some went so far as to assert that each had been observed on such occasions to turn suddenly pale. What could be the matter? Every body wondered—no one knew. Some attributed their changed deportment to the exhaustion consequent upon late hours and excitement; a few hinted the probability of a family; many whispered that Sir Henry—some that Lady Anne—gambled. Others, again, insinuated that each had too good cause to be dissatisfied with the other's fidelity. When, however, it got currently reported that a letter was one evening given to Sir Henry at his club, which blanched his face and shook his hand as he read it—that his whole manner was disturbed for days after, and that he even absented himself from a grand debate in the House—an occasion on which he was specially pledged to support his party—curiosity was at once heightened and bewildered. Then, again, it was undeniable that they treated one another with the utmost tenderness—*really*, unequivocally. Lady Anne, however, daily exhibited symptoms of increasing disquietude; the lustre faded from her eye, the colour from her cheek—her vivacity totally disappeared—she no longer even affected it. "How thin she gets!" was an exclamation heard on all hands. They were seen less frequently in society; and even when they did enter into it, 'twas evidently an intolerable burden. Sighs were heard to escape from Lady Anne; her eyes were seen occasionally filled with tears; and it was noticed, that, on observing Sir Henry watching her—which was often the case—she made violent efforts to recover her composure. Thus in tears

one evening, curiosity was strained to the utmost when Sir Henry approached her, bowed among the gentlemen who were proposing to dance with her, drew her arm within his, and, with some trepidation of manner, quitted the room. "Good heaven! what *can* be behind the scenes?" thought fifty different people who had witnessed this last exhibition.

Questions, hints, and innuendoes were bandied about everywhere during the remainder of the season: soon after the close of which, Lady Anne brought her husband a "son and heir;" and as soon as circumstances would permit, the whole establishment was ordered out of town—and Sir Henry and his lady set off no one knew whither. It was presently discovered, however, that they were spending the summer in a sequestered part of Switzerland. At an advanced period of the autumn they returned to London; and the little that was seen of them in society served to show that their continental sojourn had worked little or no change in either—save that Lady Anne, since her accouchement, was far more delicate in health than usual under similar circumstances. Rumour and speculation were suddenly revived by an extraordinary move of Sir Henry's—he broke up, at a moment's warning, his extensive town establishment, and withdrew to a beautiful mansion about ten or twelve miles distant from the metropolis. Strange as was such a step, it had the effect, probably contemplated by the Baronet, of quieting curiosity, as soon as the hubbub, occasioned by the removal of its cause, had ceased. In the vortex of London pleasure and dissipation, who can think of objects no longer present to provoke inquiry? One thing was obvious—that Lady Anne's family either were, or affected to be, in the dark about the source of her disquietude. The old peer, whose health was rapidly declining, had removed to his native air, in a remote part of Ireland. Several of his daughters, fine fashionable women, continued in town. It was whispered that their visits to Sir Henry's new residence had been coldly discouraged: and thus, if secrecy and seclusion were the objects aimed at by the Baronet, he apparently succeeded in attaining them.

I may observe, that during the period above referred to, several inquiries had been made of *me* concerning the topics in

question, by my patients, and others—who supposed that a former professional acquaintance with the Baronet, slight though it was, gave me some initiation into the mysteries of his conduct. Such, I need hardly say, were queries I was utterly unable to answer. Sir Henry, though a polite, was at all times a distant, uncommunicative man: and had he even been otherwise, we came but seldom into personal contact since his marriage. I therefore shared, instead of satisfying, the prevalent curiosity respecting his movements.

It was late in the evening of the 25th of April, 181—, that a letter was put into my hands, bearing on the envelope the words "Private and confidential." The frank was by Sir Henry Harleigh, and the letter, which also was from him, ran thus. Let the reader imagine my astonishment in perusing it!

"DEAR DOCTOR ———, My travelling carriage-and-four will be at your door to-morrow morning between nine and ten o'clock, for the purpose of conveying you down to my house, about ten miles from town—where your services are required. Let me implore you not to permit any engagement—short of life or death—to stand in the way of your coming at the time, and in the mode I have presumed to point out. Your presence, believe me!—is required on matters of special urgency,—and—you will permit me to add—of *special confidence*. I may state, in a word, that the sole object of your visit is Lady Anne. I shall, if possible, and you are punctual, meet you on the road, in order that you may be in some measure prepared for the duties that will await you. I am, etc., etc.

"HENRY HARLEIGH.

"P.S. Pray forgive me, if I say I have opened my letter, for the sake of entreating you not to apprise *any body* of the circumstance of my sending for you."

This communication threw me into a maze of conjectures. I apprehended that the ensuing morning would introduce me to some scene of distress—and my imagination could suggest only family discord as the occasion. I soon made the requisite arrangements; and when the morning came, without having

shown my wife the Baronet's letter, or giving her any clue to my destination, jumped into the pea-green chariot—and four the instant that it drew up at my door—and was presently whirled out of town at the rate of twelve miles an hour. I observed that the panels of the carriage had neither crest nor supporters; and the colour was not that of the Baronet's. I did not meet the Baronet, as his letter had led me to expect. On reaching the park gates, which stood open, the groom behind leaped down the instant that the reeking horses could be stopped, opened the carriage-door, and with a respectful bow informed me that the Baronet begged I would alight at the gates. Of course I acquiesced, and walked up the avenue to the house, full of amazement at the apparent mystery which was thrown about my movements. I ascended the spreading steps which led to the hall-door, and even pushed it open without encountering any one. On ringing the bell, however, an elderly and not very neatly dressed female made her appearance—and asked me, with a respectful curtsy, “whether my name was Dr. —.” On being answered in the affirmative, she said that Sir Henry was waiting for me in a room adjoining, and immediately led the way to it. I thought it singular enough that no male domestic should have hitherto made his appearance,—knowing that in town Sir Henry kept an unusually large retinue of such gentry. I thought, also, that I perceived something unusual, not only in the countenance and manner of the female who had answered my summons, but of the groom who attended me from town. I was soon, however, in the presence of the Baronet. The room was spacious and lofty, and furnished in a style of splendid elegance. Several busts, statues, and valuable paintings graced the corners and sides, together with a noble library, containing, I should think, several thousand volumes. Before I had had time to cast more than a cursory glance around me, Sir Henry issued from a door at the further extremity of the library, and, advancing hastily to me, shook me by the hand with cordiality. He wore a flowered green velvet dressing-gown, and his shirt collars were turned down. I thought I had never seen a finer figure, or a more expressive countenance—the latter, however, clouded with mingled sternness and anxiety.

"Doctor," said Sir Henry, in a low tone, "I have sent for you on a most melancholy errand to-day"—he seemed agitated, and paused—proceeding, "I have infinite satisfaction in being able to avail myself of your services—for I know that you are both kind and experienced—as well as—confidential?" Again he paused, and looked full at me;—I bowed, and he resumed.

"Possibly you may have occasionally heard surmises about Lady Anne and myself?—I believe we have occasioned no little speculation latterly!"—I smiled, and bowed off his inquiry. "I am conscious that there has been some ground for it"—he continued with a sigh—"and I now find the time is arrived when all must be known—I must explain it all to you.—You have, I believe, occasionally met us in society, and recollect her ladyship?"

"Several times, Sir Henry—and I have a distinct recollection of her.—Indeed"—

"Did it ever strike you that there was any thing remarkable either in her countenance or deportment?"

I looked, at a loss to understand him.

"I—I mean—did you ever observe a certain peculiarity of expression in her features?"—he continued, earnestly.

"Why—let me see—I have certainly observed her exhibit languor and lassitude—her cheek has been pale, and her countenance now and then saddened with anxiety. I supposed, however, there was no unusual mode of accounting for it, Sir Henry"—I added, with a smile. The Baronet's face was clouded for a moment, as if with displeasure and anxiety.

"Ah"—he replied, hastily—"I see—I understand you—but you are quite mistaken—totally so. Pray, is that the general supposition?"

"Why—I am not aware of its being expressed in so many words; but it was one that struck *me* immediately—as a matter of course." As I was speaking, I observed Sir Henry changing colour.

"Doctor —," said he, in a low agitated voice, grasping my arm as if with involuntary energy—"We have no time to lose. One word—alas, *one* word—will explain all. It is horrible torture to me—but I can conceal it no longer. You must

be told the truth at once. Lady Anne is—*insane!*” He rather gasped than spoke the last word. He stood suddenly still, and covered his face with his hands. He shook with agitation. Neither of us spoke for a moment or two—except that I almost unconsciously echoed the last word he had uttered. “*Insane!*—Why, I can scarcely believe my ears, Sir Henry. Do you use the last word in its literal—its medical sense?”

“Yes, I do!—I mean that my wife is mad—Yes! with a mad-woman you are asked to sit down to breakfast. I can assure you, Doctor —, that the anguish I have latterly endured on this horrid account has nearly driven me to the same condition! Oh God, what a dreadful life has been mine for this last year or two, as I have seen this tremendous calamity gradually befalling me!”

I implored him to restrain his feelings.

“Yes—you are right,” said he, after a pause, in which he tried to master his emotion—“I have recovered myself. Let us repair to the breakfast-room. For Heaven’s sake, appear—if you can—as though nothing had transpired between us. Make any imaginable excuse you please for coming hither. Say you were called in by me, on my own account—for—for—any complaint you choose to mention. It will be for you to watch my poor Lady Anne with profound attention—but, of course, not obviously. I shall take an opportunity—as if by chance—of leaving you alone with her. Afterwards, we will concert the steps necessary in this dreadful emergency. By the way—you must not expect to see any thing wild or extravagant in her manner. She will not appear even eccentric—for she is very guarded before strangers. Doctor, for mercy’s sake, don’t commit yourself—or me!” he whispered, as we regained the room we had quitted. He paused for a moment, as if to expend a heavy sigh,—and then, opening the door through which he had originally entered to receive me, ushered me into the breakfast-room. Lady Anne—beautiful creature—in a white morning-dress, sat beside the silver urn, apparently reading the newspaper. She seemed surprised at seeing me, and bowed politely when Sir Henry mentioned my name, without moving from her seat. Her cheek was very pale—and there was an expression of deep anxiety—or



rather apprehension—in her eye, which glanced rapidly from me to Sir Henry, and from him to me. With all his efforts, Sir Henry could not appear calm—His cheek was flushed—his hand unsteady—his voice thick—his manner hurried.

“Are not you well, Sir Henry?” inquired his lady, looking earnestly at him.

“Never better, love,” he replied, with an effort at smiling.

“I fear I have disturbed your ladyship in reading the Morning Post,” said I, interrupting an embarrassed pause.

“Oh, not at all, sir—not the least. There is nothing in it of any interest,” she replied, with a faint sigh; “I was only looking, Henry, over a silly account of the Duchess of ——’s fête. Do you take breakfast?” addressing me.

“A single cup of tea, and a slice of this tongue, are all I shall trouble your ladyship for. Talking, by the way, of fêtes,” I added, carelessly, “it is whispered in the world that your ladyship had taken the veil—or—died—in short, we are all wondering what has become of your ladyship—that is, of *both* of you!”

“Ah!” said the Baronet, with affected eagerness, “I suppose, by the way, we come in for our share of hint and innuendo! Pray, what is the latest coinage, doctor, from the mint of scandal and tittle-tattle?”

Lady Anne’s hand trembled as she handed me the cup of tea I had asked for—and her eye settled apprehensively on that of her husband. “Why, the general impression is, that you are playing misanthrope, in consequence of some political pique.” Sir Henry laughed feebly. “And your ladyship, too, turns absentee! I fear you are not in the health—the brilliant spirits—which used to charm the world.”

“Indeed, Doctor, I am not! I am one of the many victims”——

“Of ennui,” interrupted the Baronet, quickly, fixing an imperative eye upon his lady; I saw with what nervous apprehension, lest she should afford even the desired corroboration of what he had told me in the garden.

“Yes, yes, ennui,” she replied, timidly; adding, with a sigh, “I wonder the world remembers us so long.”

"I have a note to write, Doctor," said the Baronet suddenly, treading at the same time gently on my foot, "which I intend to beg you will carry up to town for me. Will you excuse me for a few moments?" I bowed. "Lady Anne, I dare say, will entertain you from the Morning Post—ha! ha!"

She smiled faintly. I observed Sir Henry's eye fixed upon her, as he shut the door, with an expression of agonizing apprehension. The reader may imagine the peculiar feelings of embarrassment with which I found myself at length alone with Lady Anne. Being ignorant of the degree or species of her mental infirmity, I felt much at a loss how to shape my conversation. As far as one could judge from appearances, she was as perfectly sane as I considered myself. I could detect no wildness of the eye—no incoherence of language—no eccentricity of deportment—nothing but an air of languor and anxiety.

"Sir Henry is looking well," said I, as he closed the door.

"Yes—he always looks well; even if he were ill, he would not look so."

"I wish I could sincerely compliment your ladyship on your looks," I continued, eyeing her keenly.

"Certainly—I *have* been better than I am at present," she replied, with a sigh—"What I have to complain of, however, is not so much bodily ailing, as lowness of spirits."

"Your ladyship is not the first on whom a sudden seclusion from society has had similar effects. Then why not return to town—at least for a season?"

"There are—reasons—why I should at present prefer to continue in retirement," she replied, dropping her eyes to avoid the steadfast look with which I regarded them.

"Reasons! permit me to ask your ladyship the import of such mysterious terms!" I inquired, with gentle earnestness, drawing my chair nearer to her, believing that the ice was at length broken.

"I am not aware, Doctor," said she, coldly, "that I said any thing that should be called *mysterious*."

"Pardon, pardon me, my lady! I was only anxious lest you might have any secret source of anxiety preying on your mind, and from which I might have the power of relieving you. Per-

mit me to say, how deeply grieved I am to see your ladyship's altered looks. I need not disguise the fact that Sir Henry is exceedingly anxious on your account'—

"What! what! Sir Henry anxious—on my account!" she repeated, with an air of astonishment; "why, can it then be possible that I am the object of your present visit, Dr. —?"

I paused for a moment. Why should I conceal or deny the fact, thought I.

"Your ladyship guesses aright. Sir Henry's anxieties have brought me hither this morning. He wishes me to ascertain whether your ladyship labours under indisposition of any kind."

"And pray, Doctor," continued her ladyship, turning pale as she spoke, "what does he imagine my complaint to be! Did he mention any particular symptoms?"

"Indeed he did—lassitude—loss of appetite—lowness of spirits."

She raised her handkerchief to her eyes, which, glistening with tears, she presently directed to the window, as if she dreaded to encounter mine. Her lips quivered with emotion.

"Dear lady, for Heaven's sake, be calm! Why should you distress yourself!" said I, gently placing my fingers upon her wrist, at which she started, withdrew her hand, looked me rather wildly full in the face, and bursting into tears, wept for some moments in silence.

"Oh, Doctor——!" at length she sobbed, in hesitating, passionate accents—"you cannot—you cannot imagine how very ill I am—*here*," placing her hand upon her heart. "I am a wretched, a miserable woman! There never lived a more unfortunate being! I shall never, never be happy again," she continued, vehemently.

"Come, come, your ladyship must make a confidant of me!—What, in Heaven's name, can be the meaning of all this emotion? No one, sure, can have used you ill? Come, tell me all about it!"

"Oh, I cannot—I dare not! It is a painful secret to keep, but it would be dreadful to tell it. Have you *really* no idea of it? Has it not, then, been openly whispered about in the world?" she inquired eagerly, with much wildness in her manner.

Alas, poor Lady Anne! I had seen and heard enough to satisfy me that her state corroborated the fears expressed by Sir Henry, whose return at that moment, with a sealed note in his hand, put an end to our melancholy *tête-à-tête*. He cast a sudden keen glance of scrutiny at his lady and me, and then went up to her, and kissed her tenderly, without speaking. What wretchedness were in his features at that moment! I saw by his manner, that he desired me to rise and take my leave; and after a few words on indifferent subjects, I rose, bowed to her ladyship, and, accompanied by the Baronet, withdrew.

"Well, am I right or wrong, Doctor, in my terrible suspicions?" inquired the Baronet, his manner much disturbed, and trembling from head to foot, as we stood together in the large bow-window of his library. I sighed, and shook my head.

"Did she make any allusions to the present arrangement I have been obliged to adopt in the house?"

I told him the substance of what had passed between us. He sighed profoundly, and covered his eyes for a moment with his hands.

"Is her ladyship ever violent?" I inquired.

"No, seldom—never, never! I wish she were! Any thing—any thing to dissipate the horrid monotony of melancholy madness—but I cannot bear to talk on the subject. I can scarcely control my feelings!" He turned from me, and stood looking through the window, evidently overpowered with grief. For a minute or two neither of us spoke.

"The dreadful subject *forces* itself upon us," said he, suddenly turning again towards me—"Doctor, what, in Heaven's name—what is to be done in this tremendous emergency! Let our first care be to prevent exposure. I suppose a temporary seclusion, I'm afraid, will be necessary?" he added, in a hollow whisper, looking gloomily at me. I told him I feared such a course would certainly be advisable, if not even necessary; and assured him that he need be under no apprehension on that score, for there were many admirable retreats for such patients as his unfortunate lady, where privacy, comfort, amusement, and skilful surveillance, were combined. I told him not to despond of his lady's early restoration to society.

"Oh, Doctor!"—he groaned, clasping his hands vehemently together—"the maddening thought that my sweet, my darling wife, must be banished from my bosom—from her home—from her child—and become the inmate of—of—a——." He ceased abruptly. A wild smile shot across his features.

"Doctor," said he, lowering his tone to a faint whisper, "can I trust you with a secret? I know I am acting imprudently—unnecessarily disclosing it—but I know it will be safe with *you*!"

I bowed, and listened in breathless wonder \* \* \* My flesh crept from head to foot as he went on. I had been all along the dupe of A MADMAN. His eye was fixed upon me with a devilish expression. The shock deprived me of utterance—for a while, almost of sight and hearing. I was startled back into consciousness, by a loud laugh uttered by the Baronet. He was pointing at me, with his arm and finger extended, almost touching my face, with an air of derision. The dreadful truth flashed all at once upon my mind. I could now understand the illness,—the melancholy of Lady Anne; whose blanched countenance, looking through the half-opened door, caught my eye at that moment, as I happened to turn in the direction of the breakfast-room. I trembled lest the madman should also see her, and burst into violence!

The "secret" of the Baronet consisted in his alleged discovery of a mode of converting *tallow into wax*: That it would, when carried into effect, produce him a revenue of fifty thousand a-year: That because the king could not prevail upon him to disclose it, he had sent spies to watch all his movements, and had threatened to arrest him for high treason! All this horrid nonsense he told me in a loud, serious, energetic tone of voice and manner; and though my countenance must have turned deadly pale when the shocking discovery first broke upon me, and my violent agitation became apparent, Sir Henry did not seem to notice it. I know not what called forth the laugh I have mentioned, unless it was the delight he experienced from the success with which he had imposed upon me so long.

"But, Doctor," he continued, "I have not disclosed this great secret to you for nothing. I set about discovering it in

consequence of an alarming accident which has happened to me, and of which both you and the world will ere long hear much. It became necessary, in a word, that I should develop a new source of independence, and, thank Heaven, at length it is found! But the mere *money* it will produce is the least consideration—there are grander results to follow—but of them anon. You, Doctor, are a scientific man—I am but superficially so; and that is a species of knowledge essential to the successful use of my great discovery. We must therefore become *partners*—eh?” I bowed. “The terms, you know, we can arrange afterwards. Ah, ha, ha! what will my constituents—what will my political friends—say to this? Sir Henry Harleigh turned wax-maker!—Why, Doctor, why are you so silent?”

I had been pondering all the while on the proper course to follow under such extraordinary and melancholy circumstances, and therefore permitted him to ramble on as he pleased.—What should I do? It was next to impossible for me to have another interview with Lady Anne before leaving. I thought it on the whole advisable not to alarm his suspicions by any such attempt, but to take my departure as quietly and quickly as possible: determined, on reaching London, to communicate immediately with Mr. Courthrope, his brother-in-law, with whom I had some little acquaintance, and with him suggest such measures as were necessary to secure the safety, not only of the Baronet, but his wretched lady. This resolution formed, I felt anxious to be gone. As the poor Baronet's cogitations, however, seemed far from approaching a close, I found it necessary to interrupt him.

“Well, Sir Henry,” said I, moving from the window-recess, “I must leave you, for I have many engagements in town.”

“Do you know, now,” said he, with a puzzled air, “I positively cannot remember what it was I had to think about! How very absurd! *What* was it, now!” standing still, and corrugating his brows. “Oh, it was whether it would be proper for me to see Lady Anne before I left—Ah,” said he briskly, “aye, so it was—I recollect—see Lady Anne?—No—I think not,” he replied, with an abrupt, peculiar tone and manner, as if displeased with the proposal. “I will accompany you to the road where you will find the carriage in readiness to take you back

to town." He at the same time took from a pocket-book in his bosom pocket a note-case, and gave me a check; by way of fee, of £500!

"By the way," said he, abruptly, as arm-in-arm we walked down to the park gates, "what, after all, are we to do with Lady Anne? How strange that we should have forgotten her! Well, what step do you intend taking next?"—I sighed.

"I must turn it over carefully in my mind, before I commit myself."

"Ah, Sallust!—*Priusquam incipias—consulto; sed ubi consulueris—sed ubi consulueris*, Doctor ——."

"*Maturè facto, opus sit*, Sir Henry," I replied, humouring his recollection.

"Good. There never was any thing more curt and pretty." He repeated the sentence. "Well, and *what* will you do?"

"I cannot precisely say at present; but you may rely upon seeing me here again this evening. I hope you will conceal it from Lady Anne, however, or it may alarm her."

"Mind me, Doctor," said he abruptly, his features clouding over with a strange expression, "I—I—will have no violence used."

"Violence! my dear Sir Henry! violence! God forbid!" I exclaimed, with unaffected amazement.

"Of course, Doctor, I hold you *personally*," laying a strenuous emphasis on the last word,—"*I hold you personally* responsible for whatever measures may be adopted. Here, however, is the carriage. I shall await your return with anxiety." I shook him by the hand, and stepped into the chariot.

"Good morning—good morning, Sir Henry!" I exclaimed, as the postillions were preparing to start. He put in his head at the window, and in a hurried tone whispered,—"*On second thoughts*, Dr. ——, I shall decline any further interference in the matter—at least to-day." He had scarcely uttered the last words, when the chariot drove off.

"Hollo! hark ye, fellow! stop! stop!" shouted the Baronet, at the top of his voice, "stop, or I'll fire!" The postillions, who, I observed, had set off at pretty near a gallop, seemed disposed

to continue it; but on hearing the last alarming words, instantaneously drew up. I looked with amazement through the window, and beheld Sir Henry hurrying towards us—fury in his features, and a pocket-pistol in his extended right hand.

“Good God, Sir Henry!” I exclaimed, terror-struck, “what can be the meaning of this extraordinary conduct?”

“A word in your ear, Doctor,” he panted, coming close up to the carriage door.

“Speak, for Heaven’s sake, speak, Sir Henry,” said I, leaning my head towards him.

“I suspect you intend violent measures towards me, Doctor —.”

“Against *you!* Violent measures—against *any body?*—You are dreaming, Sir Henry!”

“Ah, I see further into your designs than you imagine, Doctor —! You wish to extract my secret from me, for your own exclusive advantage. So, mark me—if you come again to — Hall, you shall not return alive—so help me —! Adieu!” He strode haughtily off, waved his hand to the terrified postillions, and we soon lost sight of the unhappy madman. I rejoiced to find myself thundering townward, as fast as four horses could carry me, in obedience to the orders I had given the postillions, the instant that Sir Henry quitted us. At length we reached a steep hill, that compelled us to slacken our pace, and give breath to our panting horses. I opened the front window, and bespoke the nearest postillion.

“Boy, there! Are you in Sir Henry’s service?”

“No, sir, not exactly—but we serves him as much as thof we was, for the matter of that,” he replied, touching his hat.

“Were you surprised to see what occurred at starting?”

“No, sir,” he replied, lowering his tone, and looking about him, as if he expected to find the Baronet at his heels. “He’s done many a stranger thing nor that, sir, lately!”

“I suppose, then, you consider him not exactly in his right senses, eh?”

“It a’nt for the likes o’ me to say such a thing of my betters, sir; but *this* I may make bold for to say, sir, if as how I, or any o’ my fellow-sarvants, had done the likes o’ what we’ve lat-



terly seen up at the Hall there, they'd a' clapped us into jail or Bedlam long ago!"

"Indeed! Why, what has been going on?"

"You'll not tell of a poor lad like me—will you, sir?"

"Oh, no—you may be sure of that—I'll keep your secret."

"Well, sir," said he, speaking more unconstrainedly, turning round in his saddle, full towards me—"first and foremost, he's discharged *me*, and Thomas here, my fellow-sarvant, an' we takes up at the Inn, a mile or so from the Hall; likewise the coachman and the footman; likewise all the women sarvants—always excepting the cook, and my lady's maid—and an't *them* a few sarvants for to do all the work of that great Hall? An't that strange-like, sir?"

"Well, what else? How does Sir Henry pass his time?"

"Pass his time, sir? Why, sir, we hears from cook, as how he boils candles, sir," quoth the fellow, grinning.

"Boils candles, sirrah? What do you mean? Are you in earnest?"

"Yes, sir, I be indeed! He'll boil as many as twenty in a day, in the cook's best saucepans; and then he pours the most precious brandy into the mess—wasting good brandy—and then throws it all into a deep hole every night, that he has dug in the garden."

"Well!" said I, with a sigh, "but what does her ladyship all this while?"

"Oh, sir, our poor lady is worn almost, in a manner, to skin and bone. She follows him about like a ghost, and cries her eyes out; but for all that she is so gentle-like, he's woundy starn with her, and watches her just like a cat does a mouse, as one would say! Once he locked her in her bedroom all day, and only gave her bread and water! But the strangest thing is yet to come, sir; he makes out that it's *her* that's mad! so that for a long time, we all believed it was so—for, sir, it's only of late, that we began to see how the real truth of the matter stood, sir. Sir Henry was always, since we've known him, a bit queer or so, but steady in the main; and as our poor lady was always mopish and melancholic-like, it was nat'ral we should give in to

believe it was her that was, as one would say, melancholy mad, and so all true what Sir Henry said of her."

"Is Sir Henry ever violent?"

"Lord, sir! the cook tells strange tales of him just latterly. He bolts every door, great and small, in the Hall, with his own hands, every night, and walks about with a loaded blunderbuss!

"My lady's maid told my sister, as a secret, sir, that Sir Henry always sleeps every night with a bare drawn sword under his pillow, and a couple of loaded pistols stuck into the watch-pockets, as they call 'em, and frightens my lady to death with his pranks."

I could scarcely believe what they were telling me.

"Why, my boy, I cannot believe that all this is true?"

"Deed, sir, we wish it warn't!"

"How long have *you* known it?"

"Only a day back, or so."

"And why did not you set off for London, and tell——."

"Lord, sir—*us* spread about that Sir Henry was mad! Nobody would believe us: if we'd gone up to town with them stories the great folk would ha' come down, and he'd a' persuaded them it was all false—and what would have become of *we*?"

"Drive on—drive on, boys, for your lives," said I, finding we had at length surmounted the hill, and directed them to go at once to the house of Mr. Courthrope. Indeed there was not a moment to be lost, for it was clear that the madman's suspicions were roused, indefinite as might be his apprehensions; and his cunning and violence, each equally to be dreaded, might prompt him to take some dangerous, if not fatal step, in my absence. Fortunately, I found Mr. Courthrope at home, and immeasurably shocked he was at my intelligence. It seemed that the Baronet and he had been totally estranged for some months owing to an affront, which he was now satisfied arose out of his unhappy relative's insanity. Our arrangements were soon made. We exchanged the chariot in which I had returned to town, for a commodious carriage, calculated to hold four or five persons, and drove off at once to the residence of Dr. Y——, one of the most eminent "mad-doctors," as they are somewhat unceremoniously denominated. Our interview was but brief. In

less than half an hour, Dr. Y——, Mr. Courthrope, and I, with two keepers, deposited ourselves respectively within and without the vehicle, and set off direct for —— Hall.

In due time we reached the park gates, and Dr. Y——, Mr. Courthrope, and I, there alighted, directing the carriage to follow us at a leisurely pace to the hall-door. I rang the bell; and, after waiting nearly a minute or two, an elderly woman answered our summons.

“Can we see Sir Henry Harleigh?” inquired Mr. Courthrope.

“No, sir,” was the prompt reply.

“And why not? My good woman, we *must* see Sir Henry immediately, on business of the highest importance.”

“Indeed! Then you should have come a little earlier!”

“Come a little earlier?” said I; “what do you mean? Sir Henry himself appointed this evening.”

“Then it’s clear he must have changed his mind; for he and my Lady both set off in a post-chaise-and-four some two hours ago, howsoever, and I don’t know where, either; perhaps you had better go after him!”

We stood looking at one another in amazement.

“In what direction did he go?” I inquired.

“Down the road, sir. He desired me to tell any one that might call, that he was gone off to Wales.”

I sighed with vexation and alarm; Mr. Courthrope looked pale with apprehension; while Dr. Y——, with his eyes half-closed, stood looking with a smiling inquisitiveness at the confident woman that was addressing us. A pretty stand-still were we arrived at! What was now to be done!

“Here!” said Dr. Y——, in an under tone, beckoning us to follow him to a little distance from the door. We did so.

“Pho, pho!” he whispered, taking our arms into his—“the woman is trifling with us. Sir Henry is at this moment in the Hall—aye, as surely as we are now here!”

“Indeed! How can you possibly”—

“Ah, he must be very clever, either sane or insane, that can deceive *me* in these matters! ’Tis all a trick of Sir Henry’s—I’ll lay my life on’t. The woman did not tell her tale naturally enough. Come, we’ll search the Hall, however, before we go

back again on a fool's errand! Come, my good woman," said he, as we reascended the steps, "you have not told us the truth. We happen to know that the Baronet and his lady are at this moment above stairs, for we saw him just now at the corner of the window."

This cool invention confounded the woman, and she began to hesitate. "Come," pursued our spokesman, "you had better be candid; for we will be so—and tell you we are determined to search this Hall from one end to the other, from top to bottom—but we will find him we come to seek."

"Oh, lord!" replied the woman, with an air of vexation, "you must do as you please, gentlemen—I've given you my answer, and you'll take the consequences."

With this she left us. After a short consultation, Mr. Courthrope volunteered to go through the principal rooms alone. In about ten minutes' time he returned, not having seen any thing of the fugitives, except a letter lying on the library-table, in the Baronet's frank, the ink of which was scarcely dry. It proved only, however, a blank envelope. We determined together to commence a strict search over the whole Hall. Every room, however, we explored in vain, and began to despair of success.

The afternoon had been very gloomy, and, at length, the rain came down in torrents. The thunder rattled directly overhead, in fearful proximity, followed in a second or two by lightning of terrible vividness. Peal upon peal, flash after flash, amid the continued hissing of the hail and heavy rain, followed one another, with scarce a minute's intermission. Nothing attracted the eye without but the drenched gloomy grounds, and the angry lightning-laden sky; a prospect this, which, coupled with thoughts of the melancholy errand on which we were engaged, completely depressed our spirits—at least I can answer for my own.

"Gloomy enough work this, both within and without!" exclaimed Dr. Y—. "If Sir Henry is travelling, he will be cooled a little, I imagine."

"What can he have done with Lady Anne? I tremble for her safety!" exclaimed Mr. Courthrope.

"Oh, you may depend she's safely stowed somewhere or other! These madmen are crafty beyond—" said Dr. Y——, when the doors of an old-fashioned oaken cabinet, which we had examined, but imagined locked, were suddenly thrown wide open, and forth stepped the Baronet, in travelling costume, with a composed haughty air.

"Gentlemen," said he, calmly, "are you aware of the consequences of what you are doing? Do you know that I am Sir Henry Harleigh, and that this happens to be my house? By what warrant—at whose command—do you thus presume to intrude upon my privacy?"

He paused, his hand continuing extended towards us with a commanding air. His posture would have charmed a painter. The suddenness of his appearance completely astounded Mr. Courthrope and myself, but not so Dr. Y——, the experienced Dr. Y——! who, with a confident bow and smile, stepped forward to meet Sir Henry almost at the moment of his extraordinary *entrée*, just as if he had been awaiting it. Never, in my life, did I witness such a specimen of consummate self-possession.

"Sir Henry, you have relieved us," said Dr. Y——, with animation, "from infinite embarrassment; we have been searching for you in every corner of the house!"

"You have been—*searching*—for me, sir! Your name!" exclaimed the Baronet, with mingled hauteur and astonishment, stepping back a pace or two, and drawing himself up to his full height.

"*Pray*, Sir Henry, relieve us, by saying where her ladyship is to be found!" pursued the imperturbable Dr. Y——. I could scarce tell why, but I *felt* that the Doctor had mastered the madman—as if by magic. The poor Baronet's unsteady eye wandered from Dr. Y—— to me, and from me to Mr. Courthrope.

"Once more, sir, I beg the favour of your name?" he repeated, not, however, with his former firmness.

"Dr. Y——," replied that gentleman, promptly, bowing low. The Baronet started. "Dr. Y——, of ——!" he whispered, after a pause, in a low thrilling tone.

"Precisely—the same, at your service, Sir Henry," replied the

Doctor, again bowing. Sir Henry's features whitened sensibly. He turned aside, as if he could not bear to look upon Dr. Y—, and sunk into a chair beside him, murmuring, "Then I am ruined."

"Do not, Sir Henry, distress yourself!" said Dr. Y—, mildly, approaching him—but he was motioned off with an air of disgust. Sir Henry's averted countenance was full of horror. We stood perfectly silent and motionless, in obedience to the signals of Dr. Y—.

"George," said Sir Henry, addressing Mr. Courthrope in a faltering tone, "*You are not my enemy*"——

"Dear, dear Henry!" exclaimed Mr. Courthrope, running towards him, and grasping his hand, while the tears nearly overflowed.

"Go and bring Lady Anne hither!" said the Baronet, his face still averted; "you will find her in the summer-house, awaiting my return."

Mr. Courthrope, after an affirmative nod from Dr. Y— and myself, hurried off on his errand, and, in a few moments, returned, accompanied—or, rather, preceded by Lady Anne, who, in a travelling-dress, flew up the grand staircase, burst open the doors, and rushed into the room, almost shrieking, "Where—where is he? Dear, dear Henry, my husband! What have they done to you? Whither are they going to take you? Oh wretch!" she groaned, turning towards me her pale, beautiful countenance, full of desperation, "is all this *your* doing?—Love! love!" addressing her husband—who never once moved from the posture in which he first placed himself in the chair, "I am your wife! Your own Anne!" and she flung her arms round his neck, kissing him with frantic vehemence.

"I thought we should have a scene!" whispered Dr. Y— in my ear; "'twas very wrong in me to permit her coming! Pray be calm, my lady," said he, "do, for God's sake—for pity's sake—be calm," he continued, apparently unnoticed by Sir Henry, whose eyes were fixed on the floor, as if he were in profound meditation. "You will only aggravate his sufferings!"

"Oh yes, yes," she gasped, "I'll be calm!—I am so!—There! I am very calm now!" and she strained her grasp of Sir Henry

with convulsive violence—he, all the while, passive in her arms as a statue! Dr. Y—— looked embarrassed. “This will never do—we shall have Sir Henry becoming unmanageable,” he whispered.

“Can I say a single word to your ladyship, alone?” he inquired, softly.

“No—no—no!” she replied, with mournful vehemence through her closed teeth—“you shall NEVER part me from my husband! Shall they, love! dearest?” and loosing her embrace for a moment, she looked him in the face with an expression of agonizing tenderness, and suddenly reclasped her arms around him with the energy of despair.

“Speak to her ladyship—calm her—you alone have the power,” said Dr. Y——, addressing Sir Henry, with the air of a man who expects to be—who *knows* that he will be obeyed. His voice seemed to recall the Baronet from a reverie, or, rather, rouse him from a state of stupor, and he tenderly folded his lady in his arms, saying, fondly, “Hush, hush, dearest! I will protect you!”

“There! there! did you hear him? Were these the words of—of—a—madman?” almost shrieked Lady Anne.

“Hush, Anne! my love! my dearest sweet Anne! They say we must part!” exclaimed the wretched husband, in tones of thrilling pathos, wiping away the tears that showered from his poor wife’s eyes,—“but ’tis only for a while”——

“They *never* shall! they NEVER shall! I won’t—I won’t—won’t,” she sobbed hysterically. He folded her closer in his arms—and looking solemnly upwards, repeated the words,—“Take—oh take her to your care!” He then burst into a loud laugh, relaxed his hold, and his wretched wife fell swooning into the arms of Mr. Courthrope, who instantly carried her from the room.

“Now, Sir Henry—not a moment is to be lost,” said Dr. Y——. “Our carriage is at the door—you must step into it, and accompany us to town. Her ladyship will follow soon after, in your own carriage.”

He rose, and buttoned his surtout. “What,” said he, eagerly, “has his Majesty *really* sent for me, and in a friendly

spirit? But," addressing me with a mysterious air, "you've not betrayed me, have you?"

"Never—and never can I, dear Sir Henry," I replied, with energy.

"Then I at once attend you, Dr. Y——. Royalty must not be trifled with. I suppose you have the sign-manual?" Dr. Y—— nodded, and without a farther inquiry after Lady Anne, Sir Henry accompanied us down stairs, took his hat and walking-stick from the hall-stand, drew on his gloves, and, followed by Dr. Y——, stepped into the carriage, which set off at a rapid rate, and was soon out of sight. I hastened, with a heavy heart, to the chamber whither Lady Anne had been conducted. Why should I attempt to dilate upon the sufferings I there witnessed—to exhibit my wretched patient writhing on the rack of torture? Sweet suffering lady! Your sorrows are recorded above! Fain would I draw a curtain between your intense agonies and the cold scrutiny of the unsympathising world!

From Lady Anne's maid I gathered a dreadful corroboration of the intelligence I had obtained in the morning. True I found it to be, that every domestic, except herself and the cook, had been dismissed by the despotic Baronet; the former retaining her place solely through the peremptoriness of his lady; the latter from necessity. Why did not the disbanded servants spread the alarm?—was explained by the consummate cunning with which Sir Henry, to the last, concealed his more violent extravagances, and the address with which he fixed upon Lady Anne the imputation of insanity, alleging frequently, as the cause of dismissing his servants, his anxiety to prevent their witnessing the humiliation of his lady. More effectually to secure himself impunity, he had supplied them liberally with money, and sent them into Wales! On one occasion he had detected Sims, the maid, in the act of running from the Hall, with the determination, at all hazards, of disclosing the fearful thralldom in which they were kept by the madman; but he seemed apprised of her movements—she fancied, even of her intentions—as if by magic;—met her at the Hall gates, and threatened to shoot her, unless she instantly returned, and, on her knees, took an oath of secrecy for the future. He would not allow a stranger, or visitor



of any description, under any pretence, to enter the precincts of the Hall, or any member of his family, except as above-mentioned, to quit them. He had prayers three times a-day, and walked in procession every day at noon round the house—himself, his lady, her maid, and the cook; with many other freaks of a similar nature. He got up at night, and paraded with fire-arms about his grounds! I understood that these palpable evidences of insanity had made their appearance only for a few days before the one on which I had been summoned. Sir Henry, I found, had always been looked upon as an eccentric man; and he had tact enough to procure his unfortunate *Lady* the sympathy of his household, on the score of imbecility. After giving the maid such general directions as suggested themselves, to procure an immediate supply of attendants, and to have the neighbouring apothecary called in on the slightest emergency—and enjoining her to devote herself entirely to her unhappy lady—I returned to her chamber. The slight noise I made in opening and shutting the door startled her ladyship from the brief doze into which she had fallen a few minutes before I quitted her bedside. She continued in a state of lamentable exhaustion; and finding the soothing draught I had ordered for her was beginning to exhibit its drowsy agency, I resigned my patient into the hands of the apothecary whom I had sent for, and hastened up to town by one of the London coaches which happened to overtake me.

Late in the evening Mr. Courthrope called at my house, and informed me that they had had a dreadful journey up to town: For the first mile or two, the Baronet, he said, appeared absorbed in thought. He soon, however, began to grow restless—then violent—and, ultimately, almost unmanageable. He broke one of the carriage windows to atoms, and almost strangled one of the keepers, whom it was found necessary to summon to their assistance, by suddenly thrusting his hand into his neckerchief. He insisted on the horses' heads being turned towards the Hall; and finding they paid no attention to his wishes, began to utter the most lamentable cries, which attracted many persons to the carriage. On reaching Somerfield-House, the private establishment of Dr. Y——, whither it was thought advisable, in the first

instance, to convey the Baronet, till other arrangements could be made, he became suddenly quiet. He trembled violently, his face became pale as ashes, and he offered no opposition to his being led at once from the carriage into the house. He imagined it was the Tower. He sat in silent moodiness for a length of time, and then requested the attendance of a chaplain and a solicitor. In a private interview with the former, he fell down upon his knees, confessing that he had several times attempted the life of Lady Anne, though he declared with solemn asseverations that he was innocent of *treason* in any shape. He owned, with a contrite air, that justice had at length overtaken him in his evil career. He imagined, it seemed, as far as they could gather from his exclamations, that he had that morning murdered his lady! On Mr. Courthrope taking leave of him for the evening, he wrung his hands with the bitterness of a condemned criminal who is parting with his friends for ever, and in smothered accents warned him to resist the indulgence of unbridled passions!

I determined, in the morning, to make such arrangements as would leave me at liberty to pay an early visit to Lady Anne, and was on the point of stepping into my chariot, to hurry through my morning round, when a carriage rolled rapidly to the door, and, in a few seconds, I observed her maid handing out Lady Anne Harleigh. Deeply veiled as she was, and muffled in an ample shawl, I saw at once the fearful traces of her yesterday's agony and exhaustion in her countenance and feeble tottering gait. She almost swooned with the effort of reaching the parlour. I soon learned her object in hurrying thus to town; it was to carry into effect an unalterable determination—poor lady!—to attend personally on Sir Henry—even in the character of his menial servant. It was perfectly useless for me to expostulate—she listened with impatience, and even replied with asperity. In fine, I was obliged to promise her an interview with her wretched husband.

About six o'clock her ladyship, together with her sister, Lady Julia —, who had been hastily summoned from the country, and Mr. Courthrope, drove with me to Somerfield-house. They were all shown into the drawing-room, where Dr. Y— and I

left them, that we might prepare his patient for the visit. Dr. Y—— saw no objection to the whole party being admitted : so, in a moment's time, we introduced the wretched couple to one another.

"Ah, Henry!" exclaimed Lady Anne, the moment she saw him, rushing into his arms, where she lay, for a while, silent and motionless. I suspected she had fainted.

"Julia—is that you? How are you?" inquired the Baronet, with an easy air, still holding his wife in his arms. She sobbed violently. "Hush, Anne, hush!"—he whispered. "You *must* be calm; they allow no noise here of any kind. They will order you to leave the room! Besides—you disturb *me*—so that I shall never be able to get through the interview!" All this was said with the coolest composure, as if he were quite unconscious of being the object of his wife's agonising attentions. Her sobs, however, became louder and louder. "Silence, Anne!" said the Baronet, sternly; "this is foolish!" Her arms instantly fell from around him, for she had swooned—and I bore her from the room—begging the others to continue till my return. I soon restored my suffering patient by a potent draught of sal volatile—and enabled her once more to return to her husband's presence. We were all seated, but conversation languished.

"It is now my bitter duty," said the Baronet, with a serious air, breaking the oppressing silence, "to explain the whole mystery. Have you firmness, Anne, to bear it?"—She nodded—"And in the presence of so many persons?" Again she nodded—to speak was impossible.

"Perhaps we had better leave?" said I.

"No—not one of you, unless you wish. The more witnesses of truth the better,"—replied the Baronet—proceeding with much solemnity of manner—"I am not—I never was—a dishonourable man; yet I fear it will be difficult to persuade you to believe me, when you shall have heard all. The dreadful secret, however, must come out; I feel that my recent conduct requires explanation—that disguise is no longer practicable, or availing. The hand of God has brought me hither, and is heavy upon me—you see before you a wretch whom He has marked with a curse heavier than that of Cain!"

He paused for a moment, and turned over the leaves of his manuscript, as if preparing to read from them. We all looked and listened with unfeigned astonishment. There was something about his manner that positively made me begin to doubt the fact of his insanity—and I was almost prepared to hear him acknowledge that, for some mysterious purpose or another, he had but been feigning madness. Lady Anne, pale and motionless as a statue, sat near him, her eyes riveted upon him with a dreadful expression of blended fondness, agony, and apprehension.

“Behold, then, in me,” continued Sir Henry, in a stern undertone—“an IMPOSTOR. The world will soon ring with the story; friends will despise me; the House of Commons will repudiate me; relatives will disown me; my wife even”—raising his eyes towards her—“will forsake me. I am no Baronet”—he paused—he was evidently striving to stifle strong emotions—“I have no right either to the title—which I have disgraced—the fortune which I have wantonly squandered—the hand I have dishonoured.” His lips, despite his efforts at compression, quivered, and his cheeks turned ashy pale. “But I take God to witness, that at the time of my marriage with this noble lady,” pointing with a trembling hand to Lady Anne, “I knew not what I know now about this matter—that *another* was entitled to stand in my place, and enjoy the wealth and honours—what—does it not, then, confound you all?”—he inquired, finding that we neither looked nor uttered surprise at what he said—“Nothing like agitation at the confession? Is it then, *no news*? Are you all prepared for it? Has, then, my privacy—my confidence—been violated? How is this, Lady Anne?” he pursued, with increasing vehemence—“Tell me, Lady Anne, is it *you* who have done this?” The poor lady forced a faint smile into her pallid features—a smile as of fond incredulity. “Ha! cockatrice! away!”—he shouted, springing from his chair, and pacing about the room in violent agitation. Lady Anne, with a faint shriek, was borne out of the room a second time insensible.

Mr. Courthrope caused Lady Anne and her sister, as soon as the former could be removed with safety, to be conveyed to his own residence, which they reached, happily, at the same time

that Mrs. Courthrope—one of Lady Anne's intimate friends—returned from the country, to pay her suffering relative every attention that delicacy and affection could suggest. What *now* was the situation of this once happy—this once brilliant—this once envied couple! Sir Henry—in a madhouse; Lady Anne—heart-broken, and, like Rachel, “refusing to be comforted!” All splendour faded—the sweets of wealth, rank, refinement, loathed! What a commentary on the language of the Royal Sufferer in Scripture—“And in my prosperity, I said, I shall *never* be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.”

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The ravings of Sir Henry, on the occasion last mentioned, of course passed away from my recollection, with many other of his insane extravagances, till they were suddenly revived by the following paragraph in a morning paper, which some days afterwards I read breathlessly and incredulously.

“We understand that the lamentable estrangement, both from reason and society, of a once popular and accomplished Baronet, is at length discovered to be connected with some extraordinary disclosures made to him some time ago concerning the tenure by which he at present enjoys all his large estates, and the title—as it is contended—wrongfully. The new claimant, who, it is said, has not been long in this country, and is in comparatively humble circumstances, has intrusted the prosecution of his rights to an eminent solicitor, who, it is whispered, has at length shaped his client's case in a form fit for the investigation of a court of law; and a very formidable case, we hear, it is reported will be made out. If it should be successful, the present unfortunate possessor, in addition to being stripped of all he holds in the world, will have to account for several hundred thousand pounds. The extensive and distinguished connexions of Sir — have, we understand, been thrown into the utmost consternation, and have secured, at an enormous expense, the highest legal assistance in the country.”

Wonder, pity, alarm, perplexity, by turns assailed me, on reading this extraordinary annunciation, which squared with

every word uttered by the Baronet on the occasion I have alluded to, and which we considered the mere hallucination of a madman. Could, then, this dreadful—this mysterious paragraph—have any foundation in fact? Was it *this* that had shaken, and finally overturned, Sir Henry's understanding? And did Lady Anne know it? Good God, what was to become of them? Would this forthwith become the topic of conversation and discussion, and my miserable patients be dragged from the sacred retreats of sorrow and suffering, to become the subjects of general inquiry and speculation? Alas, by how slight a tenure does man hold the highest advantages of life!

During the next few weeks, I visited, almost daily, both Sir Henry and Lady Anne. It was a dreadful period for the former, whose malady broke out into the most violent paroxysms, rendering necessary restraints of a very severe character. Who could have believed that he was looking on the once gay, handsome, accomplished, gifted Baronet, in the howling maniac, whom I once or twice shuddered to see chained to a staple in the wall, or fastened down on an iron-fixed chair, his head close shaven, his eyes blood-shot and staring, his mouth distorted, uttering the most tremendous imprecations! I cannot describe the emotions that agitated me as I passed from this frightful figure, to the bedside of the peaceful, declining sufferer, his wife, buoying her up from time to time with accounts of his improvement. How I trembled as I told the falsehood!

Sir Henry's bodily health continued to improve; his flesh remained firm; the wilder paroxysms ceased, and soon assumed a mitigated form. In his eye was the expression of settled insanity! I confess I began to think, with the experienced Dr. Y——, that there was little reasonable hope of recovery. His case assumed a different aspect almost daily. He wandered on from delusion to delusion, each absurder than the other, and more tenaciously retained. I several times introduced the name of Lady Anne, curious to see its effect upon him; he heard it with indifference, once observing, "that he had formed a plan about her which would not a little astonish certain persons." I represented her feebleness—her emaciation. He said coldly, that he was sorry for it, but she had brought it upon herself; quoting

the words, "Thus even-handed justice," etc. He adopted a mode of dress, that was remarkably ridiculous, and often provoked me to laughter, in spite of myself—a suit of tightly-fitting jacket and pantaloons, made of green baize, with silk stockings and pumps. His figure was very elegant and well-proportioned, but in this costume, and with his hair cut close upon his head, looked most painfully absurd. This was Sir Henry Harleigh, Baronet, M. P. for the county of —, husband of the beautiful Lady Anne —, master of most accomplishments, and owner of a splendid fortune! Thus habited, I have surprised him, mounted on a table in the corner of his room, haranguing his quiet keeper, with all the vehemence of parliamentary oratory; and on my entrance, he would sneak down with the silliest air of schoolboy shame! He became very tractable, took his meals regularly, and walked about in a secluded part of the grounds, without being mischievous, or attempting to escape. And who shall say that he was not happy? Barring a degradation, of which only *others* were sensible, what had he to trouble him? Where, in this respect, lay the difference between Sir Henry, wandering from delusion to delusion, reveling in variety, and the poet, who always lives in a world of dreams and fancies all his own?

And Lady Anne—the beautiful—the once lively Lady Anne—was drooping daily! Alas, in what a situation were husband and wife! I could not help likening them to a noble tree, wreathed with the graceful, the affectionate ivy, and blasted by lightning—rending the one asunder, and withering the other. For so in truth it seemed. Lady Anne was evidently sinking under her sorrows. All the attentions of an idolizing family, backed by the fond sympathies of "troops of friends"—even the consolations of religion—seemed alike unavailing! The reader has not yet, however, been put into distinct possession of the cause of all this devastation.

It seems that, shortly after his marriage, his solicitor suddenly travelled to the Continent after him, to communicate the startling—but in the Baronet's estimation ridiculous—intelligence, that a stranger was laying claim to all he held in the world, of title and fortune. The lawyer at length returned to England,

over-persuaded, by the Baronet, to treat the matter with contemptuous indifference; and nothing further was in fact heard for some months, till, soon after Sir Henry's return, he received one evening—at his club—a circumstance which I have before said appeared to confirm certain speculations then afloat—a long letter, purporting to come from the solicitor of the individual, preferring the fearful claim alluded to. It stated the affair at some length, and concluded by requesting certain information, which, said the writer, might possibly have the effect of convincing his client of his error, and conducing to the abandonment of his claim. This shocking letter at length roused the Baronet from his lethargy. Several portions of it tallied strangely with particular passages in the family history of Sir Henry, who instantly hurried with consternation to his solicitor, by whom his worst apprehensions were aggravated. Not that the lawyer considered his client's case desperate; but he at once prepared his agitated client for a long, harassing, and ruinous litigation, and exposure of the most public nature. It cannot be wondered at that a sense of his danger should prey upon his feelings, and give him that disturbed manner which occasioned the speculations, hints, and innuendoes, mentioned in an early part of this paper. He anxiously concealed from his lady the shocking jeopardy in which their all on earth was placed; and the constant effort and constraint—the withering anxiety—the long-continued apprehensions of ruin—at length disordered, and finally overthrew his intellects. What was the precise nature of his adversary's pretensions, I am unable to state technically. I understand it consisted of an alleged earlier right under the entail. To support his claim, every quarter was ransacked for evidence by his zealous attorney, often in a manner highly indelicate and offensive. The upstart made his pretensions as public as possible; and a most imprudent overture made by Sir Henry's solicitor, was unscrupulously—triumphantly—seized upon by his adversary, and through his means at length found its way into the newspapers. The additional vexation this occasioned Sir Henry may be readily imagined; for, independently of his mortification at the circumstance, it was calculated most seriously to prejudice his interests; and when he kept ever before his agonised eye



the day of trial which was approaching, and the horrible catastrophe, he sunk under the mighty oppression. Lady Anne had, despite her husband's attempts at secrecy, for some time entertained faint suspicions of the truth; but as he obstinately, and at length sternly interdicted any inquiry on her part, and kept every document under lock and key, he contrived to keep her comparatively in the dark. He frequently, however, talked in his sleep, and often did she lie awake listening to his mysterious expressions with sickening agitation. The illness of Sir Henry and his lady, together with its occasion, were now become generally known; and the cruel paragraph in the morning paper above copied, was only the precursor of many similar ones, which at length went to the extent of hinting, generally, the nature of the new claimant's pretensions, with the grounds of Sir Henry's resistance.

The contest respecting the title and estates went on as rapidly as the nature of the case would permit. The new claimant was, as I think I hinted before, a man of low station; he had been, I believe, a sort of slave-driver, or factotum, on a planter's estate in one of the West India islands: and it was whispered that a rich Jew had been persuaded into such confidence in the man's prospects, as to advance him, from time to time, on his personal security, the large supplies necessary to prosecute his claims with effect. My heart misgives me, however, that the reader will complain of being detained so long amongst these scenes of monotonous misery—I would I had those of a different character to present to him!—Let me therefore draw my long narrative to a close, by transcribing a few extracts from the later entries in my journal.

*Saturday, November 5, 18—.*—This was the day appointed for the trial of the important cause which was to decide the proprietorship of the title and possessions of Sir Henry Harleigh. Much interest was excited, and the court crowded at an early hour. Six of the most distinguished counsel at the bar had taken their seats, each with his ponderous load of papers before him, in the interest of Sir Henry, and three in that of his opponent. A special jury was sworn; the Judge took his seat; the cause was called on; the witnesses were summoned. The plain-

tiff's junior counsel rose to open the pleadings—after having paused for some time for the arrival of his client's attorney, who, while he was speaking, at length made his appearance, excessively pale and agitated. The plaintiff had been found dead in his bed that morning—having been carried thither in a state of brutal intoxication, the preceding night, from a tavern-dinner with his attorney and witnesses. He died single, and there of course was an end of the whole matter that had been attended with such direful consequences to Sir Henry and his lady. But of what avail is the now established security of his title, rank, and fortune to their unhappy owner?—an outcast from society—from home—from family—from the wife of his bosom—even from himself! What signified the splendid intelligence to Lady Anne—perishing under the pressure of her misfortunes? Would it not a thousandfold aggravate the agonies she was enduring? It has been thought proper to intrust to *me* the difficult task of communicating the news to both parties, if I think it advisable that it should be done at all. What am I to do?—What may be the consequence of the secret's slipping out suddenly from any of those around Lady Anne? About the Baronet I had little apprehension; I felt satisfied that he could not comprehend it—that whether he had lost or won the suit was a matter of equal moment to *him*!

On reaching — Hall, in the evening, I found that the news, with the delivery of which I fancied myself specially and exclusively charged, had by some means or other found its way to her ladyship at an early hour.

I found my sweet patient surrounded by her sisters, and one or two other ladies, propped up with pillows in a sort of couch, drawn before the fire, whose strong light fell full upon her face, and showed me what havoc grief had made of her once beautiful features. She was then scarcely eight-and-twenty;—and yet you might have guessed her nearly forty! The light with which her full eyes once sparkled had passed away, and left them sunk deep in their sockets, laden with the gloom of death. Her cheeks were hollow, and the deep bordering of her cap added to their wasted and shrunken appearance. One of her sisters—a very lovely woman—was sitting close beside her, and had always

been considered her image; alas, what a woful disparity was now visible!

Lady Sarah, my patient's youngest sister, was stooping down upon the floor, when I entered, in search of her sister's wedding-ring, which had fallen from a finger no longer capable of filling it. "You had better wind a little silk about it," whispered Lady Anne, as her sister was replacing it on the attenuated, alabaster-hued finger from which it had dropped. "I do not wish it ever to be removed again. Do it, love!" Her sister, in tears, nodded acquiescence, and left the room with the ring, while I seated myself in the chair she had quitted by her sister's side. I had time to ask only a few of the ordinary questions, when Lady Sarah reappeared at the door, very pale, and beckoned out one of her sisters to communicate the melancholy intelligence, that moment received, that their father, the old Earl, who had travelled up from Ireland, though in an infirm state of health, to see his dying daughter, at her earnest request,—had expired upon the road! In a few minutes, all present had, one by one, left the room, in obedience to similar signals at the door, and I was left alone with Lady Anne.

"Doctor," said she calmly, "I am afraid something alarming has happened. See how they have hurried from the room! I observed Sarah, through that glass," said she, pointing me to a dressing-glass that stood so as to reflect whatever took place at the door. "Are *you* aware of any thing that has happened?" I solemnly assured her to the contrary. She sighed—but evinced not the slightest agitation. She seemed beyond the reach of her former feeling—shielded, as it were, with a merciful apathy. I sat beside her, in silence, for about a quarter of an hour. Her eyes were closed, and I thought she was dozing. Presently one of her sisters, her eyes swollen with weeping, stepped softly into the room, and sat down beside her.

"Who is dead, love?" inquired Lady Anne, without opening her eyes. Her sister made no reply, and there was a pause. "He would have been here before this, but for"—muttered Lady Anne, breaking off abruptly. Still her sister made no reply. "Yes—I feel it; my father is dead!" exclaimed Lady Anne, adding, in a low tone, "if I had but strength to tell you of my

dream last night! Call them all in—call them all in; and I will try, while I have strength,” she continued, with more energy and distinctness than I had heard during the evening. Her eyes opened suddenly, and settled upon her sister.

“Do not delay—call them all in to hear my dream!” Her sister, with a surprised and alarmed air, hastened to do her bidding.

“They imagine I do not see my father!” exclaimed Lady Anne, her eye glancing at me with sudden brightness. “There he is—he wishes to see his children around him, poor old man!” A faint and somewhat wild smile lit her pale features for a moment. “I hear them on the stairs—they must not find me thus. I am getting cold!” She suddenly rose from her chair, drew her dress about her, and walked to the bed. Her maid that moment entered, and assisted in drawing the clothes over her. I followed, and begged her to be calm. Her pulse fluttered fast under my finger.

“I should not have hastened so much,” said she, feebly, “but he is beckoning to me!” At this moment her sisters entered the room. “The lights are going out, and yet I see him!” she whispered, almost inarticulately. “Julia—Sarah—Elizabeth—Elizabeth—Eliza—El”—she murmured; her cold hand suddenly closed upon my fingers, and I saw that the brief struggle was over!

*Tuesday, November 8.*—“On Sunday, the 6th November, at — Hall, of rapid decline, Lady Anne, wife of Sir Henry Harleigh, Bart., and third daughter of the late Right Hon. the Earl of —, whom she survived only one day.”

Such was the record of my sweet patient's death that appeared in to-day's papers. Alas, of what a sum of woes are these brief entries the exponents! How little does the eye that hastily scans them see of the vast accumulations of suffering which are there represented! On the day of the funeral Sir Henry made his escape from confinement. Advertisements were issued in all directions, offering a large reward for his capture, but with no success. Notidings were received of him for upwards of a week; when he one day suddenly made his appearance at the Hall, towards dusk, very pale and haggard—his dress in a wretched state—and de-

manded admission of a new porter, as the owner of the house. Inquiry was soon made, and he was recognised with a shriek by some of the female domestics. He was, really, no longer a lunatic—though he was believed such for several days. He gave, however, unequivocal evidence of his restoration to reason—but the grief and agony occasioned by discovering the death of his lady, threw him into a nervous fever, which left him, at the end of five months, “more dead than alive.” Had I not attended him throughout, I declare I could not have recognised Sir Henry Harleigh in the haggard, emaciated figure, closely muffled up from head to foot, and carried into an ample travelling chariot and four, which was to convey him towards the Continent. He never returned to England; but I often heard from him, and had the satisfaction of knowing that for several years he enjoyed tolerable health, though the prey of unceasing melancholy. The death of his son, however, which happened eight years after the period when the events above related occurred, was a voice from the grave, which he listened to with resignation. He died, and was buried in Italy, within the last very few years. I shall never forget that truly amiable, though unfortunate individual, whose extraordinary sufferings are here related, under a disguise absolutely impenetrable to more than one or two living individuals.

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## MY TWO AUNTS.

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PHILOSOPHERS tell us that we know nothing but from its opposite;—then I certainly knew my two aunts very perfectly, for greater opposites were never made since the formation of light and darkness; but they were both good creatures,—so are light and darkness both good things in their place. My two aunts, however, were not so appropriately to be compared to light and darkness as to crumb and crust—the crumb and crust of a new loaf; the crumb of which is marvellously soft, and crust of which is exceeding crisp, dry, and snappish. The one was my father's sister, and the other was my mother's; and very curiously it happened that they were both named Bridget. To distinguish between them, we young folks used to call the quiet and easy one Aunt Bridget, and the bustling, worrying one Aunt Fidget. You never in the whole course of your life saw such a quiet, easy, comfortable creature as Aunt Bridget—she was not immensely large, but prodigiously fat. Her weight did not exceed twenty stone, or two-and-twenty at the utmost—hot weather made some little difference; but she might be called prodigiously fat, because she was all fat; I don't think there was an ounce of lean in her whole composition. She was so imperturbably good-natured, that I really do not believe that she ever was in a passion in the whole course of her life. I have no doubt that she had her troubles; we all have troubles, more or less, but Aunt Bridget did not like to trouble herself to complain. The greatest trouble that she endured was the alternation of day and night—it was a trouble to her to go up stairs to bed, and it was a trouble to her to come down stairs to break-

fast; but, when she was once in bed, she could sleep ten hours without dreaming; and when she was once up and seated in her comfortable arm-chair, by the fire-side, with her knitting apparatus in order, and her nice, fat, flat, comfortable quarto volume on a small table at her side, the leaves of which volume she could turn over with her knitting-needle, she was happy for the day—the grief of getting up was forgotten, and the trouble of going to-bed was not anticipated. Knowing her aversion to moving, I was once saucy enough to recommend her to make two days into one, that she might not have the trouble of going up and down stairs so often. Anybody but Aunt Bridget would have boxed my ears for my impertinence, and would, in so doing, have served me rightly; but she, good creature, took it all in good part, and said, “Yes, my dear, it would save trouble, but I am afraid it would not be good for my health; I should not have exercise enough.” Aunt Bridget loved quiet, and she lived in the quietest place in the world. There is not a spot in the deserts of Arabia, or in the Frozen Ocean, to be for a moment compared for quietness with Hans Place—

“The very houses seem asleep;”

and when the bawlers of m<sup>ilk</sup>, mackerel, dabs and flounders, enter the placid precincts of that place, they scream with a subdued violence, like the hautboy played with a piece of cotton in the bell. You might almost fancy that oval of building to be some mysterious egg, on which the Génius of Silence had sat brooding ever since the creation of the world, or even before Chaos had combed its head and washed its face. There is in that place a silence that may be heard, a delicious stillness which the ear drinks in as greedily as the late Mr. Dando used to gulp oysters. It is said that, when the inhabitants are all asleep, they can hear one another snore. Here dwelt my Aunt Bridget—kindest of the kind, and quietest of the quiet. But good-nature is terribly imposed upon in this wicked world of ours; and so it was with Aunt Bridget. Her poulterer, I am sure, used to charge her at least ten per cent. more than any of the rest of his customers, because she never found fault. She was particularly fond of ducks,—very likely from a sympathy with their

quiet style of locomotion; but she disliked haggling about the price, and she abhorred the trouble of choosing them, so she left it to the man's conscience to send what he pleased, and to charge what he pleased. I declare that I have seen upon her table such withered, wizened, toad-like villains of half-starved ducks, that they looked as if they had died of the whooping-cough. And if ever I happened to say any thing approaching to reproach of the poulterer, Aunt would always make the same reply—"I don't like to be always finding fault." It was the same with her wine as it was with her poultry—she used to fancy that she had port and sherry, but she never had anything better than Pontac and Cape Madeira. There was one luxury of female life which my aunt never enjoyed—she never had the pleasure of scolding the maids. She once made the attempt, but it did not succeed. She had a splendid set of Sunday crockery, done in blue and gold, and, by the carelessness of one of her maids, the whole service was smashed at one fell swoop. "Now that is too bad," said my aunt; "I really will tell her of it." So I was in hopes of seeing Aunt Bridget in a passion, which would have been as rare a sight as an American aloe in blossom. She rang the bell with most heroic vigour, and with an expression of almost a determination to say something very severe to Betty when she should make her appearance. Indeed, if the bell-pull had been Betty, she might have heard half the first sentence of a terrible scolding; but before Betty could answer the summons of the bell, my aunt was as cool as a turbot at a tavern dinner. "Betty," said she, "are they all broke?"—"Yes, ma'am," said Betty. "How came you to break them?" said my aunt. "They slipped off the tray, ma'am," replied Betty. "Well, then, be more careful another time," said my aunt. "Yes, ma'am," said Betty. Next morning another set was ordered. This was not the first, second, or third time that my aunt's crockery had come to an untimely end. My aunt's maids had a rare place in her service; they had high life below stairs in perfection. People used to wonder that she did not see how she was imposed upon; bless her old heart! she never liked to see what she did not like to see, and so long as she could be quiet she was happy. She was a living emblem of the Pacific Ocean.



But my Aunt Fidget was quite another thing. She only resembled my Aunt Bridget in one particular, that is, she had not an ounce of lean about her, but then she had no fat neither—she was all skin and bone; I cannot say for a certainty, but I really believe that she had no marrow in her bones; she was as light as a feather, as dry as a stick, and, had it not been for her pattens, she must have been blown away in windy weather. As for quiet, she knew not the meaning of the word; she was flying about from morning till night, like a faggot in fits, and finding fault with every body and every thing. Her tongue and her toes had no sinecures. Had she weighed as many pounds as my Aunt Bridget weighed stones, she would have worn out half-a-dozen pair of shoes in a week. I don't believe that Aunt Bridget ever saw the inside of her kitchen, or that she knew exactly where it was; but Aunt Fidget was in all parts of the house at once—she saw everything, heard everything, remembered everything, and scolded about everything. She was not to be imposed upon, either by servants or tradespeople. She kept a sharp look-out upon them all—she knew when and where to go to market. Keen was her eye for the turn of the scale, and she took pretty good care that the butcher should not dab his mutton-chops too hastily in the scale—making momentum tell for weight. I cannot think what she wanted with meat, for she looked as if she ate nothing but raspings, and drank nothing but vinegar. Her love of justice in the matter of purchasing was so great, that when her fishmonger sent her home a pennyworth of sprats, she sent one back to be changed because it had but one eye. She had such a strict inventory of all her goods and chattels, that any one plundered her of a pin, she was sure to find it out. She would miss a pea out of a peck, and she once kept her establishment up half the night to hunt about for a bit of cheese that was missing, — it was at last found in the mouse-trap. “You extravagant minx,” said she to the maid, “here is cheese enough to bait three mouse-traps;” and she nearly had her fingers snapt off in her haste to rescue the cheese from its prison. I used not to dine with my Aunt Fidget so often as with my Aunt Bridget, for my Aunt Fidget worried my very life out with the history of every article that was brought to table. She

made me undergo the narration of all that she had said, and all that the butcher or the poulterer had said concerning the purchase of the provision ; and she used always to tell me what was the price of mutton when her mother was a girl—twopence a pound for the common pieces, and twopence-half-penny for the prime pieces. Moreover, she always entertained me with an account of all her troubles, and with the sins and iniquities of her abominable servants, whom she generally changed once a month. Indeed, had I been inclined to indulge her with more of my company, I could not always manage to find her residence, for she was moving about from place to place, so that it was like playing a game at hunt-the-slipper to endeavour to find her. She once actually threatened to leave London altogether, if she could not find some more agreeable residence than hitherto it had been her lot to meet with. But there was one evil in my Aunt Fidget's behaviour which disturbed me more than anything else; she was always expecting that I should join her in abusing my placid Aunt Bridget. Aunt Bridget's style of housekeeping was not, perhaps, quite the pink of perfection, but it was not for me to find fault with it ; and if she did sit still all day, she never found fault with those who did not ; she never said anything evil of any of her neighbours. Aunt Fidget might be flying about all day like a witch upon a broom-stick, but Aunt Bridget made no remarks on it ; she let her fly. The very sight of Aunt Fidget was enough to put one out of breath—she whisked about from place to place at such a rapid rate, always talking at the rate of nineteen to the dozen. We boys used to say of her that she never sat long enough in a chair to warm the cover. But she is gone—*requiescat in pace*; and that is more than ever she did in her lifetime.

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## RETRIBUTION.

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A MAY-MORNING on Ulswater and the banks of Ulswater—commingled earth and heaven. Spring is many-coloured as Autumn; but Joy, instead of Melancholy, scatters the hues daily brightening into greener life, instead of daily dimming into yellower death. The fear of Winter then—but now the hope of Summer; and Nature rings with hymns hailing the visible advent of the perfect year. If, for a moment, the woods are silent, it is but to burst forth anew into louder song. The rain is over and gone—but the showery sky speaks in the streams on a hundred hills; and the wide mountain-gloom opens its heart to the sunshine that, on many a dripping precipice, burns like fire. Nothing seems inanimate. The very clouds and their shadows look alive—the trees, never dead, are wide-awakened from their sleep—families of flowers are frequenting all the dewy places—old walls are splendid with the light of lichens—and birch-crowned cliffs, up among the coves, send down their fine fragrance to the Lake on every bolder breath that whitens with breaking wavelets the blue of its breezy bosom. Nor mute the voice of man. The shepherd is whooping on the hill—the ploughman speaking to his team somewhere among the furrows in some small late field won from the woods; and you hear the laughter, and the echoes of the laughter—one sound—of children busied in half-work, half-play—for what else, in vernal sunshine, is the occupation of young rustic life? 'Tis no Arcadia—no golden age. But a lovelier scene—in the midst of all its grandeur—is not in merry and majestic England—nor did the

hills of this earth ever circumscribe a pleasanter dwelling for a nobler peasantry, than those Cumbrian ranges of rocks and pastures, where the raven croaks in his own region, unregarded in theirs by the fleecy flocks. How beautiful the Church tower!

On a knoll not far from the shore, and not high above the water, reclined two Figures—the one almost rustic, but venerable in the simplicity of old age—the other, no longer young, but still in the prime of life—and, though plainly apparelled, in form and bearing such as are pointed out in cities, because belonging to distinguished men. The old man behaved towards him with deference, but not humility; and between them two—in many things unlike—it was clear—even from their silence—that there was Friendship. A little way off, and sometimes almost running, now up and now down the slopes and hollows, was a girl about eight years old—whether beautiful or not you could not know, for her face was either half-hidden in golden hair, or when she tossed the tresses from her brow, it was so bright in the sunshine, that you saw no features, only a gleam of joy. She was clad in russet, like a cottager's child; but her air spoke sweetly of finer breeding than may be met with among those mountains—though natural grace accompanies there many a maiden going with her pitcher to the well—and gentle blood and old flows there in the veins of now humble men—who, but for the decay of families once high, might have lived in halls, now dilapidated, and scarcely distinguished through masses of ivy from the circumjacent rocks!

The child stole close behind her father, the younger of the friends, and kissing his cheek, said, holding up some flowers she had just gathered, "Were there ever such lovely flowers seen on Ulswater before, father? I do not believe that they will ever die." And she put them in his breast. Not a smile came to his countenance—no look of love—no faint recognition—no gratitude for the gift which, at other times, might haply have drawn a tear. She stood abashed in the sternness of his eyes, which, though fixed on her, seemed to see her not—and feeling that her glee was mistimed—for with such gloom she was not unfamiliar—the child felt as if her own happiness had been sin, and, retreating into a glade among the broom, sat down and wept.

"Poor wretch, better far that she never had been born!"

The old man looked on his friend with compassion, but with no surprise; and only said, "God will dry up her tears."

These few simple words, uttered in a solemn voice, but without one tone of reproach, seemed somewhat to calm the other's trouble, who, first looking towards the spot where his child was sobbing to herself, though he heard it not, and then looking up to heaven, ejaculated, for her sake, a broken prayer. He then would have fain called her to him, in a gush of love; but he was ashamed that even she should see him in such a passion of grief—and the old man went to her of his own accord, and bade her, as from her father, again to take her pastime among the flowers. Soon was she dancing in her happiness, as before; and, that her father might hear she was obeying him, singing a song.

"For five years every Sabbath have I attended divine service in your chapel—yet dare I not call myself a Christian. I have prayed for faith—nor, wretch that I am, am I an unbeliever. But I fear to fling myself at the foot of the cross. God be merciful to me!"

The old man opened not his lips; for he felt that there was about to be made some confession. Yet he doubted not that the sufferer had been more sinned against than sinning; for the goodness of the stranger—so called still, after five years' residence among the mountains—was known in many a vale—and the Pastor knew that charity covereth a multitude of sins—and even, as a moral virtue, prepares the heart for heaven. So sacred a thing is solace in this woful world.

They rose—and continued to walk in silence—but not apart—up and down that small sylvan enclosure overlooked but by rocks. The child saw her father's distraction—no unusual sight to her—yet, on each recurrence, as mournful and full of fear as if seen for the first time—and pretended to be playing aloof with her face pale in tears.

"That child's mother is not dead. Where she is now I know not—perhaps in a foreign country, hiding her guilt and her shame. All say that a lovelier child was never seen than that wretch—God bless her—how beautiful is the poor creature now

in her happiness, singing over her flowers! Just such another must have been her mother at her age—she who is now an out-cast and an adulteress.”

The pastor turned away his face, for, in the silence, he heard groans, and the hollow voice again spoke:—

“Through many dismal days and nights have I striven to forgive her, but never, for many hours together, have I been enabled to repent my curse. For on my knees I implored God to curse her—her head—her eyes—her breast—her body—mind, heart, and soul—and that she might go down a loathsome leper to the grave.”

“Remember what He said to the woman—‘Go and sin no more!’”

“The words have haunted me all up and down the hills—his words and mine—but mine have always sounded liker justice at last—for my nature was created human—and human are all the passions that pronounced that holy or unholy curse!”

“Yet you would not curse her now—were she lying here at your feet—or if you were standing by her death-bed?”

“Lying here at my feet! Even here—on that very spot—not blasted, but green through all the year—within the shelter of those two rocks—she did lie at my feet in her beauty—and, as I thought her, innocence—my own happy bride! Hither I brought her to be blest—and blest I was even up to the measure of my misery. This world is hell to me now—but then it was heaven!”

“These awful names are of the mysteries beyond the grave.”

“Hear me, and judge. She was an orphan; all her father’s and mother’s relations were dead but a few, who were very poor. I married her, and secured her life against this heartless and wicked world. That child was born—and while it grew like a flower—she left it—and its father—me who loved her beyond light and life, and would have given up both for her sake.”

“And have you not yet found heart to forgive her—miserable as she needs must be—seeing she has been a great sinner?”

“Who forgives? The father his profligate son, or disobedient daughter? No; he disinherits his first-born, and suffers him to perish, perhaps by an ignominious death. He leaves his only

daughter to drag out her days in penury—a widow with orphans. The world condemns, but is silent; he goes to church every Sabbath, but no preacher denounces punishment on the unrelenting, the unforgiving parent. Yet how easily might he have taken them both back to his heart, and loved them better than ever! But she poisoned my cup of life when it seemed to overflow with heaven. Had God dashed it from my lips, I could have borne my doom. But with her own hand, which I had clasped at the altar—and with our Lucy at her knees—she gave me that loathsome draught of shame and sorrow;—I drank it to the dregs—and it is burning all through my being—now—as if it had been hell-fire from the hands of a fiend in the shape of an angel. In what page of the New Testament am I told to forgive her? Let me see the verse—and then shall I know that Christianity is an imposture; for the voice of God within me—the conscience, which is his still small voice—commands me never from my memory to obliterate that curse—never to forgive her and her wickedness—not even if we should see each other's shadows in a future state, after the day of judgment.”

His countenance grew ghastly—and, staggering to a stone, he sat down, and eyed the skies with a vacant stare, like a man whom dreams carry about in his sleep. His face was like ashes—and he gasped like one about to fall into a fit. “Bring me water,”—and the old man motioned to the child, who, giving ear to him for a moment, flew away to the Lake side with an urn she had brought with her for her flowers, and held it to her father's lips. His eyes saw it not;—there was her sweet pale face all wet with tears—almost touching his own—her innocent mouth breathing that pure balm that seems to a father's soul to be inhaled from the sinless spirit of Love. He took her into his bosom—and kissed her dewy eyes—and begged her to cease her sobbing—to smile—to laugh—to sing—to dance away into the sunshine—to be happy; and Lucy afraid, not of her father, but of his kindness—for the simple creature was not able to understand his wild utterance of blessings—returned to the glade, but not to her pastime, and, couching like a fawn among the fern, kept her eyes on her father, and left her flowers to fade unheeded beside her empty urn.



“Unintelligible mystery of wickedness ! That child was just three years old the very day it was forsaken—she abandoned it and me on its birth-day ! Twice had that day been observed by us—as the sweetest—the most sacred of holidays—and now that it had again come round—but I not present—for I was on foreign service—thus did she observe it—and disappeared with her paramour. It so happened that we went that day into action—and I committed her and our child to the mercy of God in fervent prayers—for love made me religious—and for their sakes I feared though I shunned not death. I lay all night among the wounded on the field of battle—and it was a severe frost. Pain kept me from sleep, but I saw them as distinctly as in a dream—the mother lying with her child in her bosom in our own bed. Was not that vision mockery enough to drive me mad ? After a few weeks a letter came to me from herself—and I kissed it and pressed it to my heart—for no black seal was there—and I knew that our Lucy was alive. No meaning for a while seemed to be in the words—and then they began to blacken into ghastly characters—till, at last, I gathered, from the horrid revelation, that she was sunk in sin and shame, steeped in the utmost pollution of unimaginable guilt.

“A friend was with me—and I gave it him to read—for in my anguish, at first, I felt no shame—and I watched his face as he read it, that I might see corroboration of the incredible truth, which continued to look like falsehood, even while it pierced my heart with agonising pangs. ‘It may be a forgery,’ was all he could utter—after long agitation ; but the shape of each letter was too familiar to my eyes—the way in which the paper was folded—and I knew my doom was sealed. Hours must have passed, for the room grew dark—and I asked him to leave me for the night. He kissed my forehead—for we had been as brothers. I saw him next morning—dead—cut nearly in two—yet had he left a paper for me, written an hour before he fell, so filled with holiest friendship, that oh ! how, even in my agony, I wept for him, now but a lump of cold clay and blood, and envied him, at the same time, a soldier’s grave !

“Wretched coward that I was to outlive that night ! But my mind was weak from great loss of blood—and the blow so

stunned me, that I had not strength of resolution to die. I might have torn off the bandages, for nobody watched me—and my wounds were thought mortal. But the love of life had not welled out with all those vital streams; and as I began to recover, another passion took possession of me—and I vowed that there should be atonement and revenge. I was not obscure. My dishonour was known through the whole army. Not a tent—not a hut—in which my name was not bandied about—a jest in the mouths of profligate poltroons—pronounced with pity by the compassionate brave. I had commanded my men with pride. No need had I ever had to be ashamed when I looked on our colours, but no wretch led out to execution for desertion or cowardice ever shrunk from the sun, and from the sight of human faces arrayed around him, with more shame and horror than did I when, on my way to a transport, I came suddenly on my own corps, marching to music as if they were taking up a position in the line of battle—as they had often done with me at their head—all sternly silent before an approaching storm of fire. What brought them there? To do me honour! Me, smeared with infamy—and ashamed to lift my eyes from the mire. Honour had been the idol I worshipped—alas! too, too passionately far—and now I lay in my litter like a slave sold to stripes—and heard—as if a legion of demons were mocking me—loud and long huzzas; and then a confused murmur of blessings on our noble commander, so they called me—me, despicable in my own esteem—scorned—insulted—forsaken—me, who could not bind to mine the bosom that for years had touched it—a wretch so poor in power over a woman's heart, that no sooner had I left her to her own thoughts than she felt that she had never loved me, and opening her fair breast to a new-born bliss, sacrificed me without remorse—nor could bear to think of me any more as her husband—not even for sake of that child whom I knew she loved—for no hypocrite was she there—and oh! lost creature though she was—even now I wonder over that unaccountable desertion—and much she must have suffered from the image of that small bed, beside which she used to sit for hours perfectly happy from the sight of that face, which I too so often blessed in her hearing, because it was so like her own! Where is my

child? Have I frightened her away into the wood by my unfatherly looks? She too will come to hate me—oh! see yonder her face and her figure, like a fairy's, gliding through among the broom! Sorrow has no business with her—nor she with sorrow. Yet—even her how often have I made weep! All the unhappiness she has ever known—has all come from me; and would I but let her alone to herself in her affectionate innocence—the smile that always lies on her face when she is asleep would remain there—only brighter—all the time her eyes are awake; but I dash it away by my unhallowed harshness, and people looking on her in her trouble, wonder to think how sad can be the countenance even of a little child! O God of mercy! what if she were to die!”

“She will not die—she will live,” said the pitying pastor—“and many happy years—my son—are yet in store even for you—sorely as you have been tried—for it is not in nature that your wretchedness can endure for ever. She is in herself all-sufficient for a father's happiness. You prayed just now that the God of Mercy would spare her life—and has he not spared it? Tender flower as she seems, yet how full of life? Let not then your gratitude to Heaven be barren in your heart—but let it produce there resignation,—if need be, contrition,—and, above all, forgiveness.”

“Yes! I had a hope to live for—mangled as I was in body, and racked in mind—a hope that was a faith—and bitter-sweet it was in imagined foretaste of fruition—the hope and the faith of revenge. I found *him* out;—there he was before me—in all that beauty by women so beloved—graceful as Apollo—and with a haughty air, as if proud of an achievement that adorned his name, he saluted me—*her husband*—on the field,—and let the wind play with his raven tresses—his curled love-locks—and then presented himself to my aim in an attitude a statuary would have admired. I shot him through the heart!”

The good old man heard the dreadful words with a shudder—yet they had come to his ears not unexpectedly, for the speaker's aspect had gradually been growing black with wrath, long before he ended in an avowal of murder. Nor, on ceasing his wild words and distracted demeanour, did it seem that his

heart was touched with any remorse. His eyes retained their savage glare—his teeth were clenched—and he feasted on his crime.

“Nothing but a full faith in Divine Revelation,” solemnly said his aged friend, “can subdue the evil passions of our nature, or enable conscience itself to see and repent of sin. Your wrongs were indeed great—but without a change wrought in your spirit——”

“Who dares to condemn the deed! He deserved death—and whence was doom to come but from me, the Avenger? I took his life—but once I saved it. I bore him from the battlements of a fort stormed in vain—after we had all been blown up by the springing of a mine; and from bayonets that had drunk my blood as well as his—and his widowed mother blessed me as the saviour of her son. I told my wife to receive him as a brother—and for my sake to feel towards him a sister’s love. True, he was younger by some years than me—and God had given him pernicious beauty—and she was young, too—oh! the brightest of all mortal creatures.” Here, covering his face with his hands, he wept like a child.

“Oh! cruel—cruel was her conduct to me—yet what has mine been to her—for so many years! I could not tear her image from my memory—not an hour has it ceased to haunt me—since I came among these mountains, her ghost is for ever at my side. Sometimes—beautiful as on our marriage day—all in purest white,—adorned with flowers—it wreathes its arms around my neck—and offers its mouth to my kisses—and then all at once is changed into a leering wretch, retaining a likeness of my bride—then into a corpse. And perhaps she is dead—dead of cold and hunger—she whom I cherished in all luxury—whose delicate frame seemed to bring round itself all the purest air and sweetest sunshine—she may have expired in the very mire—and her body been huddled into some hole called a pauper’s grave. And I have suffered all this to happen her! Or have I suffered her to become one of the miserable multitude who support hated and hateful life by prostitution? Black was her crime—yet hardly did she deserve to be one of that howling crew—she whose voice was once so sweet, her eyes so pure—and her soul so in-

nocent—for up to the hour I parted with her weeping, no evil thought had ever been hers—then why, ye eternal Heavens! why fell she from that sphere where she shone like a star? O wicked—most wicked! Yet He who judges the hearts of his creatures, knows that I have a thousand and a thousand times forgiven her, but that a chasm lay between us, from which, the moment that I came to its brink, a voice drove me back—I know not whether of a good or evil spirit—and bade me leave her to her fate. But she must be dead—and needs not now my tears. O friend! judge me not too sternly—from this my confession; for all my wild words have imperfectly expressed to you but parts of my miserable being—and if I could lay it all before you, you would pity me perhaps as much as condemn—for my worst passions only have now found utterance—all my better feelings will not return nor abide for words—even I myself have forgotten them; but your pitying face seems to say, that they will be remembered at the Throne of Mercy. I forgive her.”—And with these words he fell down on his knees, and prayed too for pardon to his own sins. The old man encouraged him not to despair—it needed but a motion of his hand to bring the child from her couch in the covert, and Lucy was folded to her father’s heart. The forgiveness was felt to be holy in that embrace.

The day had brightened up into more perfect beauty—and showers were sporting with sunshine on the blue air of Spring. The sky showed something like a rainbow—and the Lake, in some parts quite still, and in some breezy, contained at once shadowy fragments of wood, and rock, and waves that would have murmured round the prow of pleasure-boat suddenly hoisting a sail. And such a very boat appeared round a promontory that stretched no great way into the water, and formed with a crescent of low meadow-land a bay that was the first to feel the wind coming down Glencoin. The boatman was rowing heedlessly along, when a sudden squall struck the sail, and in an instant the skiff was upset and went down. No shrieks were heard—and the boatman swam ashore—but a figure was seen struggling where the sail disappeared—and starting from his knees, he, who knew not fear, plunged into the Lake, and after desperate exertions brought the drowned creature to the

side—a female meanly attired—seemingly a stranger—and so attenuated that it was plain she must have been in a dying state, and had she not thus perished would have had but few days to live. The hair was grey—but the face, though withered, was not old—and as she lay on the greensward, the features were beautiful as well as calm in the sunshine.

He stood over her awhile—as if struck motionless—and then kneeling beside the body, kissed its lips and eyes—and said only “It is Lucy!”

The old man was close by—and so was that child. They too knelt—and the passion of the mourner held him dumb, with his face close to the face of death—ghastly its glare beside the sleep that knows no waking, and is forsaken by all dreams. He opened the bosom—wasted to the bone—in the idle thought that she might yet breathe—and a paper dropt out into his hand, which he read aloud to himself—unconscious that any one was near. “I am fast dying—and desire to die at your feet. Perhaps you will spurn me—it is right you should—but you will see how sorrow has killed the wicked wretch who was once your wife. I have lived in humble servitude for five years—and have suffered great hardships. I think I am a penitent—and have been told by religious persons that I may hope for pardon from Heaven. Oh! that you would forgive me too! and let me have one look at little Lucy—*our* Lucy!”

“Not thus could I have kissed thy lips—Lucy—had they been red with life. White are they—and white must they long have been! No pollution on them—nor on that poor bosom now! Contrite tears had long since washed out thy sin! A feeble hand traced these lines—and in them a humble heart said nothing but God’s truth. Child—behold your mother. Art thou afraid to touch the dead?”

“No—father—I am not afraid to kiss her lips—as you did now. Sometimes, when you thought me asleep, I have heard you praying for my mother.”

“Oh! child! cease—cease—or my heart will burst.”

People began to gather about the body—but awe kept them aloof; and as for removing it to a house, none who saw it but knew such care would have been vain, for doubt there could be

none that there lay death. So the groups remained for a while at a distance—even the old pastor went a good many paces apart; and under the shadow of that tree the father and child composed her limbs and closed her eyes, and continued to sit beside her, as still as if they had been watching over one asleep.

That death was seen by all to be a strange calamity to him who had lived long among them—had adopted many of their customs—and was even as one of themselves—so it seemed—in the familiar intercourse of man with man. Some dim notion that this was the dead body of his wife was entertained by many, they knew not why; and their clergyman felt that then there needed to be neither concealment nor avowal of the truth. So in solemn sympathy they approached the body and its watchers; a bier had been prepared; and walking at the head, as if it had been a funeral, the father of little Lucy, holding her hand, silently directed the procession towards his own house.

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## THE NUPTIALS OF COUNT RIZZARI.

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AT La Bruca, a romantic village situated between the cities of Syracuse and Catania, stands the baronial residence of the Dukes of La Bruca, a magnificent old edifice, which, about fifty years since, was the scene of the tragic event I am about to relate. The duke, its proprietor at the time, had an only daughter, of about eighteen years of age, possessed of unusual beauty and accomplishments; these, and the large property to which she was heiress, made her hand eagerly sought after by almost all the young men of family, whose birth and fortune could entitle them to the honour of so high an alliance. From amongst these her father would gladly have permitted her to select a suitable companion. But her affections were inalienably engaged by the second son of Count Rizzari, of Catania, an intimate friend of the duke. The favoured lover was about the same age as the young lady, and had, ever since her recollection, been the companion of her childhood. A cadet, with little or no fortune, was a match to which, if there had been no other obstacle, the pride of the duke would never have consented; there was, moreover, the further impediment, that the young man was intended for the church, and, consequently, destined to celibacy. The cause of the lady's aversion to her other suitors was soon evident to both families, who were equally anxious to put a period to inclinations likely, if unchecked, to terminate in the misery of both parties. The count resolved to remove his son from a spot where, enchain'd by early associations, and excited by the continual presence of the beloved object, there seemed but little probability of his overcoming his misplaced passion.



Young Rizzari was accordingly sent to Rome, in order at once to finish his studies, and obtain the advantage of an introduction to individuals of rank and influence in the church. An ecclesiastical life was not Rizzari's natural vocation, and he resolved, internally, not to embrace it, trusting to chance and time for the birth of some event favourable to his hopes and passion. Indeed, it soon proved so, beyond what his most sanguine expectations had led him to anticipate. His elder brother, who had married subsequently to his departure, died, unexpectedly, without issue, a few months afterwards. Though really attached to his brother, the vast change in his circumstances and prospects prevented his feeling the loss so acutely as would otherwise have been natural. On receiving a summons to attend his afflicted parents, he lost not a moment, as may be imagined, in returning to Sicily. The heirs of families of distinction are never permitted to enter either the military or ecclesiastical professions, and, in the event of the younger brother's succeeding to the prospect of the paternal inheritance, the vows, if taken, are usually dispensed with by the court of Rome. The young count thus saw, in an instant, both impediments to his marriage unexpectedly removed. His father, at his solicitation, soon proposed to his friend the duke the union of the two families in the persons of their respective heirs; an offer which was accepted with pleasure by the duke, and with delight by his daughter.

An early day was appointed for the nuptial ceremony, which the duke determined should be celebrated at his feudal residence at La Bruca. Invitations were issued to all the nobility of the neighbourhood for many miles round. Of such extent were the preparations, that a fête so magnificent as that intended had not been heard of for many years. The whole country was in motion. Congratulations poured in from every quarter, and all seemed interested in the happiness of the young couple. But there was one person, the Cavaliere ——— [at the request of the friend who favoured me with the anecdote I suppress his name, that of a noble family at present existing in splendour in Catania], who did not participate in the joy and satisfaction manifested by others. This individual, who was remarkable for his wealth, his accomplishments, and his handsome person, though

still in the flower of life, was of an age which doubled that of the intended bride of the young count. One of her most impassioned admirers, he had, during the residence of Rizzari at Rome, made proposals to her father. His family and wealth sufficiently recommended him to the duke, but, having prevented his daughter from choosing the object of her affections, he resolved, at least, not to force on her a match disagreeable to herself, and, therefore, whilst he testified his own readiness to accept the offer, referred the cavaliere to his daughter for a final answer. She at once gave him a negative so decided, as to have extinguished hope in any bosom smitten by a passion less consuming and uncontrollable than that of the cavaliere. Undeterred by refusal, he continued to press his suit with an importunity, and even violence, which, instead of removing difficulties, soon heightened indifference into aversion; yet, calculating on the apparent impossibility of her being united to the object of her early flame, he relied on time and absence for obliterating from her heart the impression made on it by young Rizzari, and assiduously persevered in his unwelcome attentions. Great, then, was his rage and disappointment at the death of the elder Rizzari; and the arrival, proposal, and acceptance of the younger as the husband of the lady, whom self-love had persuaded him was, sooner or later, destined to be his own. Tortured at once by all the pangs of an unrequited passion, and by a devouring jealousy, proud and vindictive by nature, even beyond the wont of Sicilians of rank, the favoured lover became the object of a hatred too deadly to be depicted by language, and the cavaliere was heard to threaten a vengeance as terrible as were the bad passions which raged with such irresistible sway in his own guilty breast.

Soon after the acceptance of Rizzari the cavaliere disappeared from Catania; some said he had retired to one of his villas in the neighbourhood, others that he had gone abroad; in fact, no one knew whither he had betaken himself. The happiness of the lovers left them little time to think of the cavaliere, and their fancied security did not permit them, for a moment, to fear, or even dream of, the effects of his disappointment or resentment.

The happy day at length came: the marriage was celebrated in the village chapel, which was thronged to excess by rich and poor, noble and peasant. At the very moment when the enraptured bridegroom placed the emblematic circle on the slender finger of his lovely bride, a contemptuous and discordant laugh, so loud, so long, and so strange in its expression, that it resembled rather that of a fiend than that of a human being, was heard far above the hum and murmur of the assemblage in the chapel. Such extraordinary rudeness instantly drew the attention of all present; but, to their astonishment, although the ominous peal still continued, it was impossible to ascertain the individual from whom it proceeded. When it at length ceased, the ceremony continued, and the affront, if it was meant for one, was soon forgotten in the succession of circumstances of a more agreeable nature.

Every room in the superb old mansion, the bridal chamber excepted, was thrown open to the assembled hundreds: neither expense nor labour had been spared that could in any way add to the luxury and magnificence of the occasion. The tables groaned beneath the innumerable delicacies placed before the noble company, who were entertained in the vast hall of the chateau; and ample supplies gladdened the peasants and dependants of both houses, who were feasted on the lawns and gardens before the palace. The banqueting at length ceased. The villa and the grounds were alike splendidly illuminated, and, soon after nightfall, dancing commenced both within and without the building.

The bride, whose present felicity was so greatly in contrast with her late expectations, was observed to be in remarkably high spirits, making no affectation of concealing the happiness which pervaded her. After the ball had continued for some time, and all breathed satisfaction and pleasure, two persons, masked, and dressed in the costume of peasants of the country, entered the principal saloon, and instantly began dancing, throwing themselves, with garlands, which they held in their hands, into a variety of attitudes: it was observed that they both acquitted themselves surprisingly well, but one, from the contour of figure and lightness of movement, was suspected,

though both were dressed in male attire, to be a woman. It is requisite to remark that the ball was not in mask, and that it is customary in Italy and Sicily for masks, when they join a company, to make themselves known to the master of the house, as a security against the introduction of improper or unwelcome persons. This etiquette was not observed on the present occasion, but the masks entering with gestures expressive of a request for admission, they were received without difficulty, it being probably looked upon as some device for adding to the amusement of the party. Their performance exciting the admiration of the company, the grace and ease of their movements became the subject of conversation. It then appearing that they were unknown, some of the guests, curious to discover them, hinted that it was time that they should unmask, in order to take some refreshment; this they, with signs—for they spoke not—at first declined, but being pressed, signified in the same manner that they would only discover themselves to the master of the house. The bridegroom was accordingly called from the side of his bride for the purpose. Good-humouredly joining his friends in soliciting the strangers to make themselves known, they gave him to understand, always in pantomime, that since such was his desire, they were willing to gratify him, and that if he would retire with them for a moment, they would unmask to him, but to him alone, as they wished to preserve their incognito from the rest of the company.

The count and the masks withdrew together. In the meantime, the music, the dancing, and all the pleasures of the joyous scene went on. The absence of the bridegroom was scarcely noticed by any one except the bride, who, with eyes wandering in search of him, more than once testified her surprise at his stay. In about twenty minutes, the same two persons, as was evident from their figure, lately masked as peasants, re-entered the ball-room, but their dress was changed; they were now in complete mourning. Between them, one supporting the head, the other the feet, they carried a third so carefully, and entirely enveloped in a large black vest, that neither his form nor features were distinguishable. As they moved slowly on with measured pace, they pretended by signs to express their grief for the death

of the person they carried. An appearance so ominous on a nuptial night, excited sensations of an unpleasing nature ; but no one thought proper to interfere in a pantomime which, strange and ill-chosen as it was, they conceived permitted by the master of the house. The masks, having reached the middle of the room, deposited their burthen there, and began to dance round it in a variety of grotesque attitudes, caricaturing sorrow. At this ill-boding and unaccountable scene, the high spirits of the bride instantaneously forsook her, and were succeeded by an almost preternatural sensation of dejection and horror. Looking anxiously round, she again, in a faltering voice, inquired for her husband. The sister of Rizzari, one of the bridemaids, struck by her sudden paleness and ill-suppressed agitation, asked if she was indisposed. She replied, that she felt oppressed by a sense of anxiety and alarm, of which she could not conceive the origin. Her sister-in-law told her that it was nothing but the evaporation of her late unusual high spirits, which, as is often the case, were succeeded by a causeless depression. Just then, the masks having finished their feigned funereal dance, advanced to the bride ; and one of them, the male, drawing her by the sleeve, spoke, for the first time, loud enough to be heard by those around, "*Venite a piangere le nostre e le vostre miserie*"—"Come and weep for your own misery and ours.")

A chill went to the heart of the bride at these ill-omened words. She drew shudderingly back, and fell almost insensible in the arms of her sister-in-law. A murmur ran round ; it was manifest that the cause of the bride's alarm was owing to the extraordinary proceedings of the persons in mask, who, perceiving the impression they had excited, hastily withdrew. In an instant they had disappeared ; but whither they went, or what became of them afterwards, was known to no one.

In the mean time, the bystanders remarked in surprise how well the person lying on the floor performed his part of a dead man : not a limb stirred, not a muscle moved, nor was he perceived to breathe. Curiosity prompted them to touch him, and lift his arms ; they fell heavy and motionless by his side ; his hand, too, was cold to the touch—cold as that of a corpse. Sur-

prise led them farther—they uncovered his face—O God! it was that of a corpse, and that corpse was the bridegroom!

Who shall paint the dreadful scene that ensued? Exclamations of surprise, shrieks of horror, cries for the masks—here females swooning in terror—there men running to and fro with drawn swords—this inquiring the cause of the sudden disturbance—that denouncing vengeance on the murderers;—all was distraction and confusion! Her terrified friends instantly hurried away the trembling bride, anticipating some horrible event, as yet unconscious of the whole extent of her misfortune. As they bore her off, the name of her husband, dead, murdered, strangled, fell on her ears; insensibility for a few moments relieved her from the exquisite agony of her situation. They carried her to the bridal chamber—in that chamber had the accursed deed been perpetrated; the disordered furniture showed signs of a struggle; the instruments of death lay on the floor, and on the nuptial couch the infernal assassins had cast a branch of funereal cypress, the token of their premeditated and accomplished vengeance.

The duke, in whose bosom rage and anguish predominated by turns, stationed himself with a party of friends, with drawn swords, at the doors of the palace, whilst a strict but ineffectual search was carried on within. In a few minutes the party, late so joyous, broke up in consternation; hundreds instantly went off by different roads in search of the murderers, but all pursuit was unavailing. The police subsequently lent its aid: every angle of the country, for leagues round, was explored in vain. The perpetrators of the atrocious crime had escaped; nor, indeed, were they ever satisfactorily discovered.

Suspicion fell on the cavaliere; but though the most rigid search was made, he was not to be found. Some time after, it was discovered that he had left Sicily, to which he never returned, and was residing at Vienna.

It was rumoured, but the truth was never clearly ascertained, that he subsequently confessed himself the author and actor of this horrid tragedy, and gloried in the daring and fiend-like stratagem by which he had so signally accomplished it.

The widowed bride never recovered the shock. Her life was for a time despaired of. As soon as her strength enabled her, she retired into a convent, where death, the best friend of the wretched, ere long put an end to her sufferings. (1)

(1) In the year 1832, Don Luigi Nani, a Catanese priest, was imprisoned by the orders of government on a complaint of one of the families concerned, for having related this event to the public from the pulpit.

## EXTRAORDINARY HISTORY OF A BORDER BEAUTY.

BY THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

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I HAVE been advised by a number of friends to send a narrative of my life and adventures to you, as they say you can make it more interesting than I can; and that you never publish any tales but those which are strictly true. This is what I like most in your writings, that I see they are all plain, simple truth; and I entreat that you will adhere to the same rule in narrating the incidents of my life. You may elucidate or aggravate as you please; but you are not to tell any thing that did not happen, for there is no occasion for it.

I was born of decent parents, in the wilds of Dumfries-shire, in the south of Scotland. I was the second daughter; but being accounted a beauty, and very clever—clever beyond all conception, they resolved on trying me for a lady; and accordingly I embarked in this delightful pursuit by learning English, Latin, and Greek, at a country school, under the greatest pedant that I think ever lived, who believed all excellence to consist in the jabbering of those abstruse and unavailable jargons. I believe I made some little progress in the Latin rudiments, although in the Greek I never got much beyond the alphabet. But these were quite sufficient, and altogether astonished my parents at the depth, breadth, and enormous extent of my erudition; and they pronounced me mistress of the dead languages! If they had contented themselves with saying this to me, or to one another, it would have been nothing; but my father, imagining he had picked up a grand phrase, repeated it to every body. I wrote rather a fine hand—that was my only accomplishment; for I read



my Bible, our highest class-book, but very indifferently. By dint of misnaming the words I hammered through a part of it middling well; as for the long strings of names in some of the books, I feared to try them, observing that I would much rather begin the *Court Register* of London at once, or the *Liverpool Directory*, which were much more befitting a lady to know than the names of a set of old, ignorant, vulgar rascals who lived five thousand years ago. Moreover, there were some other parts of the book which I refused to read altogether, on account of their *indelicacy*, that having become a fashionable phrase at that period.

Well, at fifteen years of age, this notable mistress of the dead languages and of multiplication-table, was sent off to Liverpool to learn the more substantial accomplishments of making puddings and pastry, and acquire the childish language of the French. Of course, I took them all up in a short space—drank them in, as the ox drinketh water—as well as music. O what a prodigy I was in music! I had to pay for this ten and sixpence per hour—rather a precious matter for a poor Scots farmer! But, then, how I did rattle away on the *harps's cords*, as my father called them, that, poor man! he thought the money well earned. I was not taught to play tunes at all. Had I been taught to play my own native airs, I should have delighted in the task; for I loved them. But they were something called *lessons*, which happened to be neither sense nor nonsense; and after six-and-twenty of these lessons I was deemed perfect.

And now the Scottish beauty, the mistress of the dead languages, of the French, of multiplication-table, of pie and pudding-making, and of music, was pronounced fit and qualified to be a married wife.

I was sent to Liverpool, with the express understanding that I was to marry a cousin of my own, a nephew of my mother's, who was represented to me as a most amiable and judicious young man, of good business habits, and prodigious expectations. So, my father, honest man! before he left Liverpool, took and introduced me to my anticipated husband. He was a partner in a great warehouse in the outskirts of the town, and

we found him in his counting-house. The scene was ludicrous beyond description. I refused to go into the office, saying to my father, I would not set a foot in it until the gentleman came out and asked me, on which he laid hold of my arm, and dragged me forward.

“Hoot, Mary! what nonsense is that, woman? What need ye be feared to gang in an’ speer for your ain born cousin?—your ain flesh and blood, dame? Come along, stoopit gowk that ye’re. What’s the meanin’ o’ a’ this shilly-shallying?”—And, so saying, he dragged me on through a long passage, speaking all the way, while the clerks were peeping through below their red curtains; and I heard one say to another, “Look here, Henry! here’s something rather elegant coming.” I saw two young gentlemen looking out, one at each side of the curtains; but I turned my face to the other side, and was dragged into an elegant counting-room at the further end, where we found my cousin, George Nicholson, writing at his desk. He did not even deign to lift his eyes as we entered, until my father spoke; and then, recognising his uncle, he came and shook hands with him, and said something, I daresay kind enough, but I regarded it not, for I was in a fever. I hated the Quaker-look of the fellow, and trembled for my father’s introduction.

It was bad enough! for, honest, simple man! he was so proud of me, that I believe he was convinced in his own heart that there was not such a girl on the face of the earth. There was an exultation in his countenance that day, as he led me into the office, which no living can conceive but those who saw it. And then he introduced me in something of these terms:

“George, I have the pleasure o’ introduc’in’ to you my darling daughter Mary. I needna tell ye how prood I’m o’ her, when I inform you that she’s mistress o’ the deed languages, o’ the French, o’ music, o’ pudding-making, an’ o’ multiplication-table. She has been a dear daughter to me ae way an’ a’ ways.”

My cousin smiled; but it was not a smile of derision or contempt; it was rather a smile of benevolence, mixed with sorrow. And before he made any answer, he began and wrote! Yes, the insolent mercantile boor actually smiled, and then began and

wrote out his letter, folded it, and sealed it, before he took any notice of the object of this grand introduction, his own cousin, and the beauty of all Scotland! He then came, and, bowing diffidently, said, "I am very glad to see my fair cousin—very glad indeed;" and held out his inky hand; but mine clung to my side with perfect rigidity. My father was confounded at my sauciness and absurdity; his eyes dilated, and his mouth was elongated the wrong way. But at length he found breath to say—

"There's naeboddy can faddom thae women fo'ks, nephew George. Od, there's sickan a speerit o' contrary in them, that whatever they maist wish, that they pretend to avoid. I'm no sayin' it is sae wi' ilka thing, sic as braw claes. They're apt enough to snap at them; but with regard to men it is especially the rage. D—it, mon, tak' her i' your arms an' smack her up."

I was in a perfect agony, for I was ashamed of my father, and I disliked my cousin exceedingly; but he was too modest a man to take my father's advice. He had, I thought, the most forbidding features I had ever seen. His face was all of the same white, tallowy colour; his mouth large; and his eyes and eyelids heavy and immovable. He was of the common size, well formed, and firmly knit, and had a particularly well-shaped head; his hair was dark chesnut, and, though coarse, rather looked well at a distance. But to my father's ridiculous injunction he only answered with a smile, which was like one crying—

"No, no; my cousin and I shall be better acquainted before I take any such liberties. But as she will of course live with my mother, I hope it shall not be long until we are."

"Do you live there, sir?" said I, with an air of the most perfect disdain.

"No," said he; "being often obliged to do business with the ships at all times of the day, and all times of the night, I am sorry that it is not in my power to lodge with my parents."

"I am very glad of it, sir," said I.

My father was dumbfounded, as he calls it.

"Mary! od, lassie, ye hae nae common civility, for a' that I hae wared on ye," said he; "after I hae made ye mistress o' the deed-languages, the French, the music, the pudding-making,

an' the multiplication-table, will ye insult me afore my face by speaking to your cousin George in that gate? the lad that I hae a greater regard for than ony o' a' your kin, an' wha I wad like weel to be nearer allied to."

O! I wished the floor of the office would open and swallow me up. This was really more than I could stand. I was led to expect my cousin to be a proper man—a first-rate man; and I had engraved his picture on my heart as every thing that was handsome, manly, and beautiful. How I was disappointed! and how I was distressed at my father's coarse and broad insinuations!

But though I am sure George could not miss to see the quondary that I was in, and my dislike to him, which I did not try to disguise, he still kept his calm, stupid equanimity of countenance, and said, with a smile, that was rather a gape—

"But though I cannot lodge with my parents, along with you, cousin Mary, I have very handsome lodgings of my own above the warehouse here, into which I will be happy to introduce you, and the oftener I see you in them the better."

"I hope it shall be long before you see me there, sir," said I, with a toss of my head.

"Say ye're no sure, Mary," said my father, pulling me away; "for aw that I hae wared on ye, ye're no to suppose yoursel' sae far aboon aw the rest o' your kin. Come, come! we'll up to George's rooms, an' see if he has ony room for a wife in them. An' mair nor that, Mary, we'll see if he has aught in the bottle." And so saying, he dragged me up stairs after George, who led the way.

We were introduced to very elegant apartments, and to an old lady who was George's aunt, but no relation of mine. She was what my father called a fine douse body, and received us very kindly; but I continued as shy as it behoved a great beauty, and mistress of so many accomplishments, to be. I think I rather astonished the old woman; she was aware that there was an intention of connecting our families, that the mites of the one should support the respectability of the other; and she seemed to have a perfect veneration for her nephew, which I could not but wonder at, as I thought I could have spit upon him. We

returned to the office, where we left George, he having something to write out for my father, with which he was to call in the evening, and we took our leave. As we went along the passage, a handsome young man came out of one of the offices, and, bowing most respectfully and gracefully, asked my father if he would not like to take a turn through the warehouses. My father said he would. The young man then looked back into the office, and called, "Edward, come hither;" on which a little dwarfish fellow came and joined us. He was brother to the first, the Henry before mentioned, who was the handsomest and most beautiful young man whom I had ever seen in my life. The plan had been made up between them during the time we were with their master; and my father, in his simplicity, accepted of the offer, saying, "O, wi' a' my heart. I would like to see what kind o' stuff Geordie deals in, honest lad, to see if it can afford to maintain a wife."

We walked slowly through one large apartment after another, heaped with bales of goods to the very ceiling—Edward conducting my father, and astonishing him with the enormous value of the wares they surveyed. I paid little attention to them, or aught else save one delightful object, for Henry and I were walking at a respectful distance behind, my right arm under his left, and his right hand gently squeezing the fingers of mine. How my heart played pittie-pat! thump, thump, thump! I felt my face colouring as deep as the peony-rose, for I was afraid he would feel it with his arm across my breast, so I took my hand from his and put it aside. Henry led me into all the by-corners, and twice attempted to kiss me, which I repulsed with the highest apparent disdain and offence; although, had it not been for the innate modesty that's implanted in a virgin's breast, I could, with all my heart, have complied. He, however, kissed my hand both times, which I could not prevent.

But now my father missed us while in a corner, and turned back with the most startled look I ever beheld, calling out, "Mary! where are ye, you jaud? D—— it, are ye begun to skulk into corners with your cousin's clairks, to kiss an' court wi' them, and turn up your nose at their master? Come an' gang along wi' me here, and gie me your arm."

I was obliged to comply; so we walked all four abreast, my father genteelly observing, "I dinna ken what you an' this young chap hae been about, Mary, but your face is as red as a collop cuttit out o' the theeigh o' a heeland stott."

I am sure, sir, you will pity me when you read this. My father was an upright honest man, and you knew him partially; but there were few more unlettered and vulgar men of the same rank in Scotland. I was now obliged to listen to my father's inquiries at Edward, whether I would or not. They were very amusing, however, had he never made any remarks to me.

"What's aw thae square things biggen up aboon ane anither?"

"These are all tea-chests, sir, full of tea."

"That aw tea? Guide us! What a sipping, an' plotting, an' scandal, will gang on through the kintry afore a' that is maskit! How muckle may aw that tea be worth?"

"We have upwards of 100,000*l.* worth of tea in the warehouse just now, sir."

"A hundred thoosan' pun's? Od, callant, ye maun surely be mista'n? An' how muckle profit may that leave?"

"It is rather an equal and sure speculation the tea. I wish I could say the same of the West India produce. On the tea, just now, Mr. Nicholson can realise 20 per cent."

"Twenty per cent. on 100,000*l.*! That beats aw I ever heard in my life! Then that's 5,000*l.* a-year?"

"Twenty thousand pounds, sir, if it is all sold. And haply, if the trade is brisk to the Continent and America, we may sell as much again."

"Twenty thoosan' pun's! An' as muckle again! That's forty thoosan' pun's, isn't it? Mary, d'ye hear that, ye jaud? D—— it, ye may ride in your coach an' sax yet, if ye behave yoursel'. It's a mercy my father didna mak' me a tea-dealer, or I wad hae lost mysel'. Now, Mr. Edward, you're a gayan ceevil auld-farrant callant, how muckle d'ye think the gudes i' aw thir warehouses may be worth?"

"The last time we took stock, sir, the value was upwards of a million, at prime cost."

"I wad hae thocht they would hae been worth mair than a million. That's ten thoosan' pun's, is not it?"

"Ten hundred thousand, if you please, sir."

"*Ten hunder thoosan'!* the callant's dementit! There's no as mony goods i' the British dominions as wad come to that. *Ten hunder thoosan'!* How muckle is't?"

"It is just ten times one hundred thousand pounds, you know, sir. I shall show you it in numbers."

"Ay, cast it up, an' let Mary see it. I'm nae grit dab at the figuring. Mary, come here, ye gipsy. Look at this! This beats aw that ever I saw in my life! But there's an awfu' deal o' nothings in the soom. I like it aw the waur o' that. If that's aw sterling property, they should buy up the national debt, an' charge the interest. Mary, ye jaud, ye see what ye hae laid down at your feet. If ye step outower it, ye deserve something that I sanna name. Come, callant, let gae the winch's hand. I wistna what ye hae been sayin' or doin' till her; but ye hae made her nose as red as a lobster-tae."

Edward laughed outright. Henry blushed as deep as I did; and thus was I dragged away from the only man I ever had the least disposition to love. But the next day, at St. George's Church, he placed himself in the pew next to my uncle's, with his face straight to the very place where he knew I would sit, at the corner of the seat next my aunt. His eye never quitted mine the whole day, and I became so much affected, that I was obliged to cover my face with my hands, and look through my fingers at him. And then I saw that the dear young man loved me so well, that three or four times he was obliged to wipe a tear from his eye with his white cambric handkerchief. My heart was melted: I would have done any thing for his comfort and peace of mind that he could desire of me.

In the crowded lobby of the church he whispered an assignation in my ear. I nodded; and the very next day, when I should have gone to one of my classes, I went to the quay, and met with Henry. He received me so kindly and lovingly, that I was delighted with his gentlemanly manners. He asked me into his mother's house, which I could not refuse; so I went with him into a very elegant house, which convinced me of that which I

never durst ask, that he was one of my cousin's partners. He introduced me to his mother, a splendid, good-looking lady, covered with rings, bracelets, gold chains, and jewels of all kinds. "I am quite safe now in my love," thought I. "This must be the house of a senior partner of my cousin's—it is by far the most elegant of all that I have seen."

The lady brought wine, filled a glass for each of us, and one for herself, which she drank to my good health, and welcome to Liverpool; adding, that I was the most lovely young lady she had ever seen from Scotland; but as her son Henry might have something to whisper to me in private, she would leave us to ourselves, which she did, bidding me beware of him, for he was a sly, insinuating rascal.

He and I were sitting on the same sofa, and I felt that I never was more happy in my life, until he whispered in my ear something that I did not comprehend. Both the language and the proposal being quite new to me, I asked if he was dreaming, and speaking through his sleep? or, if that was not the case, I begged he would explain himself.

This he did by using some freedoms with me which perfectly astonished and confounded me, but which I repulsed with the highest indignation; and, deep as I was in love, I had the spirit to say, "You are a villain, sir! I am convinced that you are an unprincipled villain, to offer this rudeness to me in your own parent's house. Leave me instantly, and let me never see your face again!" and then I began a crying for vexation.

He kneeled at my feet and implored my pardon, saying that he was so deeply in love with me, so completely over head and ears in love with me, that really he did not know what he was saying or doing, and was not, at present, master either of his words or actions. Therefore he hoped I would be induced to forgive him, as his error originated wholly in overpowering love.

What could I do? I forgave him on the condition that he was never to do the like again, which he faithfully promised, and sealed it with a kiss; and away we went from his mother's house, without saying good bye. As we left the door he cast his eyes down the quay, and, wheeling round, muttered to himself,



“Good God!”—“What is the matter?” said I. “Oh, nothing at all,” said he, and wheeled me round the corner of his mother’s, and up a close; and then we walked about until my class-hour was out, and then I went home and left him.’

My cousin George came to his dinner next day, and coming rather early, desired a word with me in the garden before dinner. I refused, saying that he could have nothing to say to me which I desired to hear. He answered, “But whether you desire to hear it or not, my dear cousin, you must hear it. And if you will not hear it privately from me, you must hear it publicly to-night, which will be a great deal more disagreeable to you. Mary, I therefore beg your private ear for a few minutes.”

I walked into the garden with him, crying all the way, and refusing to give him my arm; and at length he said, “I hope, Mary, you were not aware of the dreadful error you were guilty of yesterday?” I stood still petrified with amazement, studying some saucy answer, but could find none, till he continued: “I saw you come out of a notorious house of bad fame with one of my own clerks.”

“It is a falsehood, sir—a made manifest falsehood! for it was in the gentleman’s own mother’s house that I was, and a better house than your own, or those of any of your connexions,” said I, fiercely, and reddening with anger. George gave one of his most disagreeable smiles, which were always the kindest, and said, “Mary, Mary! be calm, and do not make a fool of yourself, my dear girl; I do not ask your good opinion, as it appears I am your aversion; but you are left under the protection of my parents, and I must not see you deceived by a finished black-guard, one of my own inferior servants, but whom I have turned out of my employment this day. A young rascal, who is over head and ears in debt, and has two or three wives or mistresses in keeping already. You may look as angry as you will, Mary; but I assure you, that had any one seen you who knew you, as I saw you, your fortune was marred for ever. And if my father and mother knew that you had been in that notorious and celebrated house, with a young profligate, you would be packed off to Scotland this night, as one quite unfit for all virtuous society. I have paid the young vagabond off, and I will

miss him, for he was very clever in his department ; but if you would just confide in me, and tell me if he made any impertinent or disagreeable proposals to you, how I would chastise the puppy!

“He could not make any proposal half so impertinent or disagreeable, sir,” said I, “as your assumed interference with me or with any company I choose to keep. Who gave you a right to question and snub me in that manner, I should like to know?” And then, conscious that I had done wrong, and that my character was completely in my relation’s power, whom I despised, I felt a crying most bitterly. He proffered me his arm ; but I was so angry I struck it, and continued weeping. George only smiled at my frantic rage, and said, with the greatest suavity—

“You ought not to be offended at *me*, cousin Mary ; for what I have done and said has been with the kindest intentions. Believe me, your person and character are both dearer to me than my own, and in my bosom the secret is safe. But it was a shameful business, and you *must* beware of the like again. The scoundrel knew you were my relation, and that it was all our parents’ purpose that you should become my wife ; therefore his attempt on you was most diabolical. And I must warn you that his rage against me for paying him his wages, telling him he was a villain, and kicking him out of the office, has so enraged him against me, that, out of revenge, he will practise every art to entrap you.”

“You kick him out of the office, sir !” exclaimed I, choked with crying, “You kick him out of the office ! It sits you well to tell me such a thing, who know better ! Go about your business, and leave me to myself, you ugly, intermeddling creature !” George left me with a smile, still not one of derision, but rather of pity ; and I betook myself straight to my bed, refusing to come to dinner, or even to admit any one into my room.

“I fear she is going to be a wayward girl, this niece of mine,” said my aunt.

“Her appearance is very much in her favour,” said my uncle : “I think I never saw a more beautiful young woman, and that

a little experience and cultivation might make her a being scarce to be equalled."

"That is exactly my opinion, father," said George; "for as yet she knows no more of the world, nor of propriety of conduct in genteel society, than a child at the breast. But we must keep an eye upon her, poor woman, for Mary is a treasure not to be lost." He was as good as his word in this last resolve.

I lay down in my bed and cried till I was sick. I had a feeling that I had done egregiously wrong; but I am ashamed of the result when left to my private cogitations. I found that I did not like Henry the worse for all that had happened, but a great deal the better. Even his behaviour to me in his pretended mother's house rather endeared him to me than otherwise; it being all out of sheer love for my person, which had put him beside himself, so that he did know what he was doing. He had, moreover, begged pardon for his offence, and promised me never to do the like again. What could he do more? And then to be turned out of a lucrative engagement, and all for his love to me! It was quite irresistible; and I cannot describe how dearly I loved him! Alas for poor, dependant, infatuated woman! for the primal curse is upon her, and pretended love is a salve to her for every injury! Henry watched my goings out and comings in, and he always became the welcomer and the more welcome; but I took good care never to go near his mother's house again, nor ever to mention her to him. We had assignations for meeting every day, generally only for a few minutes. But, O, how sweet they were! There was, however, a guardian angel, who set a watch over me; and every one of those meetings were instantly made known to him where and when.

I at length set off with my lover in the mail-coach most privately, as we thought, to Gretna Green, firmly resolved to throw myself into the arms of a man who was not worth fifty pounds, and abandon all my friends and my affianced husband (by our parents), who was worth thousands a-year. I am sure you must blush for me, sir; but I shall tell the truth. There was part of our journey in the mail by night. The coach was full, but I leaned on my lover's breast; and, O, it was sweet! passing

sweet!—any fondling freedoms which he now used being all legitimate.

As we passed the bridge of Sark, on the Border, a chaise-and-four drove past us at full speed.

"There goes a pair for Graitney Green!" said one gentleman.

"I thought I saw only two gentlemen in the chaise," said another: "I would not wonder if they are rather in pursuit of a pair of runaways."

My lover's countenance changed: it became elongated to an inordinary length, and as pale as death. The passengers winked to each other. I was mad at him for his pusillanimity; being determined on my part to marry him, in spite of all opposition. The chaise-and-four drew up before the mail, and ordered a stop. The guard obeyed, knowing well the respectability of the men who ordered it, from personal acquaintance; and in a moment, my uncle was at the one door, and my cousin George at the other. I being next the door which my uncle opened, he seized me by the wrist, saying—

"Come out here, miss; you go no farther on this fool's errand at present."

"I shall not move a foot, sir," said I, "for you nor any other man alive! I'll go where I please, and see who dares hinder me!" But, before I had said this, George had pulled my lover out by the collar, and had him rolling in the mud.

"Then, you see, you must go to the old smith by yourself," said my uncle, "where you will make rather an odd figure. I doubt if he could find one in the village who would accept of you now. Come, come out here, and no more words about it."

Seeing that I was left by myself, what could I do? So I stepped out of the coach, crying bitterly, and all the while declaring that "I would not come out for any man's pleasure." My uncle gave the guard and coachman each half-a-crown, and away drove the mail at full speed; and there were we left standing, two on each side of the road. The first sight I got of my lover, he was rising from the mud, perfectly bedraggled, his face as white as a clout with rage, or else with terror.

"Henry! my dear Henry!" cried I; "are you going to suffer yourself and me both to be guided in this way?"

"No! by the powers!" and he took another terrible oath, which I do not choose to write down; "I shall so punish him, that he shall rue his insolence the longest day he has to live."

So saying, he threw off his coat and vest, that were loaded with mud (his grey beaver was off before, lying in bad circumstances), and forward he came to wreak due vengeance on my cousin, squaring most beautifully. I thought my uncle would interpose and command peace, but he stood still on the green ground, kept hold of my arm, and only smiled at my lover's intolerable wrath.

"That is like a man, Henry!" cried I. "We'll see now who kicks best! He kick you out of his office! The insolent booby! Give it him, Henry! Give it him! O knab him, knab him, knab him! We can walk to Graitney on foot."

My lover came forward, as I said, in beautiful scientific style, inch by inch, and whirling his closed fists round each other all the way. My heart danced with joy at perceiving what a drubbing my cousin George was now to get, who, poor fellow, stood just like a stump in the middle of the road, without either moving or speaking. Henry sprang forward, at length, like a dragon, upon him, bringing him a stroke that might have felled an ox; but, unluckily, he had sprung too far forward, for his stroke fell upon the back of my cousin's shoulder, while, at the same time, by a blow so quick and short that I never perceived it, he knocked Henry down. Yes, as I live, he knocked my beloved flat on his back on the abominable road! But he, like a man, though his shirt was previously like the driven snow, rolled himself over, sprung to his feet a horrible sight, and again advanced to the charge, grinning and flying on my cousin like a mad dog. My eyes were now dazzled so, that I could not see any thing distinctly; and whether it was by a blow or a trip I cannot tell, but, in one moment, George had him lying flat again, while, all the time, the insensate blockhead never moved or regarded, save by smiling most unseemly at each fall. Henry, however, like a man, arose once more, and moved to the attack more cautiously; but the result was eventually the same—down he went flat once more, bleeding horribly at both mouth and nose. He now lay still, wallowing in the mud, and cur-ing most

potently; while my cousin George kicked him behind, in a very disgraceful manner. I could stand it no more, but turning round my back, I exclaimed, "O dolt! dolt! dolt!" and cried very bitterly.

George then took him by the feet, and trailed him off the road to the green ground, saying, "We must not, however, leave the blackguard lying there, to be trodden to death."

"What, will you not even take the poor young man, whom you have half murdered, home in your carriage?" said I.

"No. If it were to save him from a place I shall not name, he should not set his foot in my carriage, the dog!" said my uncle.

"He is more afraid than hurt," said George. "In fact, he is hardly hurt at all. But just look, cousin Mary! could you take a beast like that into the carriage with you?"

I took one look of my lover, and certainly never saw any thing more disgusting, for he was writhing and cursing amid blood and mire; but yet I drew back to lend him what assistance I could, till my uncle said, with an offended tone—

"Come, come! we have enough of this flummery, and far too much. Let us go." So taking my one arm, and George the other, they dragged me into the chaise; the postilions wheeled round, and we drove again, full speed, for Liverpool, and I never saw my beautiful lover more—that appalling sight was the last.

After I had cried myself quiet, my uncle said to me, "Really, Mary, you are the most reckless girl that ever was born. What do you think is to become of you, or what are we to do with you? Were you not apprised that this young fellow was a scoundrel of the lowest grade?" I kept a sullen silence.

"You will scarcely believe," continued he, "but it is a good thing my son there can convince you, by showing you the document, that that young villain, who has not got the half of what he deserves, has taken out his passage for America, and paid the fare; but out of revenge upon us, or some more depraved motive, he laid this plan of working out your ruin before he went away. And how nearly had he effected it! Had there not been more watchful eyes over you than your own, you were ruined

for ever. And even as it is, I know not what to do with you ; for your aunt knows all, and is perfectly indignant."

"You can send me home to my parents, sir," said I ; "I wish I had never seen you nor your nasty town. And I insist on being sent home to my parents from the very next stage."

"And what will you do if sent home to your parents?" said he.

"I'll do what I please, sir," said I ; "and I shall not be accountable for my doings to you or any other man whatsoever. I assure you, I shall not."

"You were left to our care, Mary," said he, "and if I were to pack you off to your parents, it must be with some explanation. Do you not see that, in that case, you are ruined for ever, and can never set up your face in society again in this world? And, moreover, your beautiful and manly lover is on the road—are you sure that you could pass him without giving him a friendly call? I have been thinking, that the only thing I can do with you is to place you in some genteel place of confinement until this young villain has left the country, and then place you at a boarding-school, where no such thing is known. And if you behave yourself well in future, all that is past will be as if it had never been."

"No, no, my dear father," said George ; "I cannot think of having Mary any way confined. Let her go home with me, to my aunt, who knows nothing about the matter, and never shall from me. She is a widow lady, Mary, of the highest respectability, though somewhat reduced in circumstances, and she will be kinder and more indulgent to you, both for your own sake and mine, than you can conceive. You shall be free to go wherever you list, although, for a short period, there shall always be an eye upon you that I can trust. This I warn you of, to keep you on your guard ; for, as I said to you before, your character is dearer to me than my own. And when once a certain runagate has fairly left the country, you shall be at liberty to go to all balls, assemblies, plays, preachings, and wherever you please ; and whenever you tire of your lodgings, you shall be at liberty to change them."

I remained sulky and silent ; but, on reaching Liverpool, I

was asked what course I had determined on. Now, all the way, I had been considering of that. I felt that I could not face my aunt on any consideration, after eloping with one of her son's discarded servants. No, no! I would rather have thrown myself into the Mersey, for she was a haughty English dame, and proud of her riches. I had, moreover, been thinking all the way of George's kind attentions, benevolence, and steady bravery; and though I could not love him—oh no, I never could love him!—I was compelled to respect him; so, on entering Liverpool, being asked again what I had determined to do, I said I had determined to take my cousin George's offer of an asylum for the present. His aunt, Mrs. Gibbs, received us kindly, but with apparent astonishment at such a late hour, and asked if we had been over the march together? George replied that we had.

“Then may I have the pleasure of welcoming her to her own house as Mrs. Nicholson?”

“To her own house, certainly, as much as it is mine; but, I am sorry to say, not yet as Mrs. Nicholson. We were only over to Scotland on a jaunt; and she is Miss Mary Wales, or cousin Mary, as formerly. I commit her to your care, dear aunt; and hope you will be kind to her as your own daughter.”

Mrs. Gibbs promised, and performed that promise faithfully; for a more affectionate being I never met with. She gained so much on my affections, that I could not but be obliging to her, and I was so. There was nothing that I would not have done for her, and was always sorry there was so little that I could do. We slept in the same room, and went to sleep at the same time—but she was far too early a riser for me. There was one night she was seized with a sudden illness, a sort of aguish fit, when I arose, and made her a white-wine posset, which I made her take very warm; but, perceiving that she still continued to shiver, instead of returning to my own bed, I bounded in beyond her, and took her in my bosom, when, to my astonishment, the good lady began sobbing and weeping. I asked her what ailed her—if she was growing worse? She said no, she was getting better, and would soon be quite well; but such kindness and affectionate anxiety she never met with, no not from any of her own family.



The next morning, at breakfast, whenever she spoke to me, or of me, the tears came into her eyes; and, at length, George asked what it was that affected her so much?

"O George, you do not know what a treasure you and I are possessed of in this house!" said she, crying afresh; "if ever an angel appeared on earth in the form of a woman, your cousin Mary is that one."

"I am glad to hear you say so, aunt," said George; "for I confess that, with the exception of her personal beauty, I have not been able to discover any of cousin Mary's angelic qualities."

"Ah! you do not know her as I do, George! There is a shyness ingrained in a maiden's nature towards men, especially her admirers, that, though perfectly ridiculous, and often repented of, prevents the lover entirely from perceiving the good qualifications of his mistress."

She then launched out into eulogiums, and a narration which I do not choose to repeat, but which I perceived to affect George very much. Shortly after this, he gave me many valuable and elegant presents of dress and jewels. There was nothing belonging to first-rate elegance of dress that I wanted; and all came directed to me in parcels, without the least intimation from whom, so that I could do nothing else with them but use them. When I mentioned the things to George, he shook his head, and said he feared I had too many admirers in Liverpool for my good.

After it was known that my first dearly beloved Henry Russell had fairly sailed for America, there was no restraint laid on me whatever. I went to plays, balls, and assemblies; and, provided the gentlemen with whom I went were acquaintances of my uncle's family, there were no objections made—so I led a gay life; and, convinced that my former errors were not known, I was exceedingly happy. But there was something in my appearance, or, I am afraid, in the lightsomeness of my manners, that drew all the bucks of Liverpool after me. I had invitations every where. To parties on the river, parties to the country—to parties without end. I often got half-a-dozen or ten *billets-doux*, or invitations, in a forenoon, every one of which I laid open be-

fore Mrs. Gibbs and my cousin, and, of course, the certainty of my reformation was now fairly imbibed. But there was one evening, at a rout and ball given by Mrs. Fairley, that I fell in with a Sir James Callington, who never quitted me the whole evening, and at length asked permission to call on me. I did not know well what to say; for I could not well refuse Sir James's call, and yet I did not know how it might be taken. "The truth is, Sir James," said I, "that I live with my aunt there at present, above part of the warehouse of Nicholson and Co.; and I truly think that it hardly suits your quality to call at such a place. If you please, we will rather trust to chance for meeting again."

"Do you imagine that I do not know where you live?" said he; "that I do, well; for I have been watching you out and in for many a day, and, wherever you dwell, that is superior to a palace for me; I shall, therefore, take the liberty of calling on you to-morrow at three, as I particularly wish to be better acquainted with you; and I shall take my chance of a reception from your aunt and cousin."

As soon as I got home, I told all; how Sir James had made up to me, detained me as his partner the whole evening, and asked permission to call on me to-morrow, which I had declined; but he would take no refusal, saying, that he would take his chance of a reception from my relations. There was none of them said any thing good or bad; so he called next day. George came up with him, and took wine with him; but, being sent for to the office, was obliged to leave us. Sir James said every thing that was kind and flattering to me, and asked me to accompany him to a ball which a celebrated teacher of dancing was giving, and be his partner. I said I would go with the greatest pleasure if aunt Gibbs would go with me. He said he thought we might dispense with her company, but this I protested against; so, the next day, tickets were sent to us both; and as I testified a desire to go, my will being the rule of action in our small community, Mrs. Gibbs and I went. Sir James attached himself to me the whole night. We paraded the assembly-rooms together, we sat together, and we danced together; and when any other gentleman asked me to a quadrille or country-dance, his answer was

uniformly the same —“The lady is engaged for the next, sir.” I was rather chagrined at this, but could not help it. In the course of the night he opened his mind to me, telling me how much he was in love, and that he was resolved to offer me his hand and heart, as he found it impossible to exist without me ; but that, for fear of giving offence to his noble relations, from whom he had high hopes of emolument, there was a necessity that we should be married privately, and keep our marriage a secret for some time. I said that would require some consideration ; and so we parted for that night.

After that, he continued to ply me early and late with his assiduities and love-letters (and his I never showed); and though I began to fear I was going wrong, I persevered in the same path, indulging Sir James with my company whenever I could. It is said that, whenever a man thinks seriously about any error, he generally thinks aright; but a woman never. “The woman that deliberates is lost.” The more I pondered on my alliance with Sir James, the more I was delighted with it. The title of Lady Callington was so fascinating, I could not resist it; and, will it be believed, that the thoughts of my father was, of all others, my strongest inducement? I knew I was the pride of his heart, and I thought how elevated he would be to see Sir James and Lady Callington in his remote dwelling. I pictured him to myself in our little gallery in the parish church, with Sir James and I at the head of it, and he, standing with his hands in his vest-pockets, his arms akimbo, his mouth primmed, and his under lip protruded—the very emblem of satisfaction and pride; and, in short, after a month’s intense courting, I consented to elope with Sir James, on his solemn promise being given me that we should be married by the Lord Bishop of London, and every thing transacted in the most honourable way.

We had not, however, passed twenty miles, before I began to repent of my rashness, and to dread that there was a dangerous gulf before me; for he began to say he did not see the absolute necessity of the ceremony of marriage, at least for a parson, between two whose hearts were bound in an indissoluble union. I held my peace, and said not one word, but thought to myself, —“Gentleman, I’ll take care of you.”

We reached Lichfield at a late hour. He urged me to drink wine, on the fear that I would be so much fatigued. I would not taste it, but made some tea for him and me. He rung the bell, and asked for the chamber-maid. She attended; and he went out with her. I was all eye and ear, and heard this order given in a whisper, which is best heard in a quiet house—"Make my sister's bed in the same room with mine, or the one adjoining."—"Yes, sir."

This convinced me that I was a lamb in the fangs of a wolf, and I knew not what to do; but I called my natural obstinacy up to my assistance; and when Sir James desired me to go to-bed, until he got his bottle of wine with the landlord, I refused, and said I was not disposed to sleep any that night. He entreated me, but I continued the more and the more obstinate; so I sat and read on my manual, and he and the landlord took their wine, and talked politics, until they grew both considerably flushed. I knew not what to do. At length Sir James said, "I wished to see you safely lodged in your chamber, my dear sister, before I went to mine." When he called me *sister*, I gave him such a look! He did not misunderstand it; and even the pluffy landlord noted it. My lover took the rebuke; he rose and bid me good night, and added that the maid would show me to-bed when I listed. It was not long before the maid came in. I was sure she was in his pay, so I resolved to be on my guard. "It is very late, indeed, miss," said she; "I wish you would go to rest."

"Will you be so kind as sit with me here till day?" said I.

"No, I thank you, miss; that I can't do on no account whatsoever. But if you will go to your chamber, you shall have a nice comfortable one, where you shan't want nothing that a lady can desire to have." I refused; whereon she curtsied and bid me good night, smirking and nodding in a most villanous way. My heart grew sick within me, and all my splendid visions of Lady Callington faded from my view, like a meteor of the morning. I felt that I was an egregious fool, and would have given all the world, and ten times more, to have been safely back at any of my homes again; and yet I could not see with what face I could enter any of them. It might haply be from fatigue and

want of needful rest, but I never had felt so unhappy in my life as I did that morning; and I deemed it impossible for any creature to be more wretched.

A little after daybreak, when all the city and the hotel were as still as death, and not a mouse stirring, I thought I heard a gentle step on the stairs, and I felt as if my heart had sprung into my throat. Sir James immediately entered in *deshabille*. "My dearest Mary," said he, "I entreat that you will retire to rest, if it were but an hour; else the fatigue of the journey will kill you. What means this perversity? Come, let me conduct you to your chamber, my dearest love." And so saying, he pulled me from my seat with both his hands. I was in such a quandary, that, though I tried to speak, I could not; my tongue refused all utterance, and I could only whisper, "No, no!" He dragged me towards the door; but I resisted so effectively he could not; and the struggle continued until we were both nigh out of breath. I felt myself getting very angry, and yet I durst not irritate him, having no other protector. But offence loosed my tongue. "I will not be used in this rude manner, Sir James," said I, "by you or any man living; therefore please to unhand me, for I don't like this house, nor the people that are in it; and, once for all, I shall not go to-bed within its walls."

"What have you to fear, Mary, when you have me for your protector?" said he; "you could trust my honour thus far, and now distrust it all at once?"

I was now hard put to it; for fain would I have told him what an unprincipled villain I thought he was, and how deeply he had imposed on my simplicity. But I durst not. So I was obliged to say, "No, no, Sir James, it is not your honour that I dread; but I am terrified for the people of this house. I think it is a bad house, and bad people in it, and I dare not—I will not go to sleep in it."

"Well, well, then, for your own comfort and pleasure, I must teach you a little submission," said he; and, lifting me in his arms, he carried me off. I, however, got my feet against the stair, and resisted with all my force, screaming out at the same time. But the people of the house had got their lesson, for no one regarded. At length, when I was in the last extremity,

having been lifted off my feet, and only hanging by the railing of the stair with one hand, the back-door that led into the stable-yard, of which the ostler kept the pass-key, was suddenly thrown open, and a gentleman rushed along the passage, when the following sharp dialogue ensued:—

“What is the meaning of this violence? Unhand that lady, sir, this instant.”

“Indeed! By whose orders?”

“By mine, sir.”

“By yours? No, nor for ten such. This lady is mine, sir. My own, and under my protection.”

“It is a lie, sir.”

“A lie, sir! You dare not say so, villain, for your heart’s blood.”

“I say it is a lie, sir; a d—d insolent lie. If the lady were your own, you would not need to force her in that brutal style, half-naked as you are.”

“A lie, sir? A lie, sir? Do you know whom you speak to, sir?”

“Yes, I do; I know I speak to one of the vilest scoundrels that treads English ground. The lady is mine; and therefore I say unhand her this moment.”

“No, I won’t.”

“Then take that as part of your guerdon,” said George Nicholson—for it was he; and that moment he knocked Sir James down, who fell backward on the stair, grasping the air with his hands, and staring wildly. I kneeled, and clasped my cousin’s knees; and, in the fulness of gratitude, uttered these words:—  
“Dear, dear George, now I *am* glad to see you, indeed. Now I know I have a heart and an arm that will protect me.”

“Yes you have, dearest Mary,” returned he. “Please to step into your room, and I shall take counsel with Sir James.”

I did as he commanded me, but left the door open, and peeped out.

“I shall have satisfaction for this, sir,” cried Sir James, trembling with rage. “Ample and dreadful satisfaction! Have you the spirit, sir, after this outrage sir, to give me the satisfaction of a gentleman, sir?”

"I came prepared for that, Sir James," said George; "for I have brought my pistols and second along with me, Sir Adam Johnston, who shall settle the terms with you, or any one whom you shall appoint."

"And who the devil are you, sir, if it be your high mightiness's will?" said Sir James, disdainfully.

"My name is George Nicholson, of Liverpool."

"Oh, oh! I know who you are now!—a dealer in tea, and soap, and sugar-candy, and treacle, and tobacco, and Bath-bricks. Foh! go about your business, sir! I don't choose to degrade myself so low as that. What! a baronet of the United Kingdom fight a duel with a musty grocer! Ha! ha! ha! Ha! ha! ha! Good that! Good, good."

"Now, in calm blood, Sir James, I ween that the highest nobleman in the land, presuming to offer such an injury to me as you have done, is obliged to give me the satisfaction of a gentleman. The young lady is my relation, living under my protection, and my affianced spouse; and when you dared to seduce her from under my roof, with your cursed false pretences, did you not ween yourself obliged to answer to me for it?"

"No, sir; I won't answer to you, nor any low musty grocer on earth, for any thing that I have done or ever shall do. Do you understand me? A dealer in tea, and treacle, and seed-corn, demand of Sir James Callington to give him the satisfaction of a gentleman! Ho! ho! ho! I wish you good morning, sir."

George sprung up the stair before him, saying, in a loud, angry key, "Do you indeed refuse to give me the satisfaction of a gentleman?"

"Yes I do, sir."

"But I say you shall."

"No, I won't."

"Then here's for you, paltry dog!" said George; and having a heavy horse-whip in his hand, he began applying it to Sir James's "fair bodye" with such emphasis, that every lash sounded like the crack of a pistol. Sir James at first forced up and tried to seize the whip; but George, with one kick of his foot, made him stumble to the foot of the stair. Sir James then

took to his heels; and the dining-room on the first floor, in which I stood, being nearest to him, and the door open, he bolted into it, George all the while plying the whip. Sir James, then, with fumbling haste, unlatched a window, and flew out head foremost, not without receiving some tremendous lashes on his back, which was only covered by his shirt. I looked out after him, and saw him scampering over a great dunghill, in his holland shirt and trousers, in which state he had the effrontery to come down stairs and address me! If any thing could have made me laugh that morning, I would have laughed at the exhibition Sir James made; but I have made up my lee-way, as the Liverpool people say, for many a laugh I have taken at it since.

I stepped without hesitation into my cousin's chaise, along with General Sir Adam Johnstone; and I certainly felt, that morning, that my cousin was not only the bravest and most determined man I ever saw, but the most civil and best-bred. He never once mentioned Sir James's name to me, nor for what purpose either he or I came there.

But the matter did not end here. Before we reached Chester we were overtaken by Sir James and a Dr. Bentham, as his second, who gave George a challenge. It was accepted in a moment. I then ventured to interfere, and entreated my cousin not to put his life in balance with that of such a blackguard. I even endeavoured to hold him in the carriage by force; but he only laughed at me, and said he suspected the horse-whipping could not cool without some sharper blows. All the four gentlemen then retired out of my sight, and I heard four shots fired. At the first fire George was slightly wounded in the right shoulder; and at the second fire he fell. Sir James ran up with Bentham, when the latter pronounced my cousin shot through the head, and added, "Shift for yourself; for I cannot leave him in this condition. I must put my life in venture until I see what can be done for him, or at least until I can put him into better hands."

"I'm d— glad I have shot the —," said Sir James; and scampered off as fast as he could, even faster than he did over the dunghill at Lichfield. When I saw him coming running



across the field without his second, I guessed something was far wrong ; but quite unacquainted with these matters, I knew not what it was ; and as Sir James came breathless to his carriage, which stood alongside of ours, I called out to him, " For the love of heaven, Sir James, tell me what has happened ? " The horrid unfeeling answer that he gave me cannot be repeated ; and that instant he entered his carriage, which went off at the full gallop ; and that night he got aboard a vessel on his way to Spain.

I could not rest in the carriage ; and though horrified at the idea of seeing my brave deliverer lying shot through the head, I could not resist hasting to the place, where I found the two gentlemen busily engaged in steeping the wounds with wet handkerchiefs ; but my cousin lay quite insensible. The wounds were thus :—the first shot had grazed the right shoulder where it joins the nape, and merely ruffled the skin ; the next had taken effect exactly an inch higher, about where the spine joins the skull, and had not only entirely deadened sensation, but continued to bleed incessantly. Sir James had meant to shoot him through the head both times, and it was astonishing how nearly he had effected it. Dr. Bentham assured me my cousin would revive, for that there was no fracture ; but I was afraid he would bleed to death, and besought them to stem the bleeding. The doctor said, he judged it best and safest to encourage the bleeding for a while ; but at my entreaties he dressed the wound and bound it up. We then bore him to the carriage in my Indian shawl, with a good deal of difficulty, and his face being downward, he vomited a little by the way. The doctor then said all would soon be well. He placed him in a half-lying, half-sitting posture in his carriage, and ordered the postillions to drive to Chester, that being the nearest town to where we then were. Dr. Bentham assured me my cousin was living, but merely stunned. I did not in the least believe it, but weened that I was riding in the coach with a corpse. However, we had not driven for ten minutes, until he opened his eyes. The motion of the carriage revived him, but there was no speculation in those eyes. He saw none of us, regarded nothing that passed among us ; and though I squeezed his hand, and spoke

to him, he never looked at me. Dr. Bentham directed us to the house of a Dr. Butler, who lived next door to the City Exchange, assuring us that we might place full reliance on his skill, and then left us, to shift for himself, as he said.

That night my uncle received the following:—

“Sir,—Your son fought a duel this morning with Sir J. C—, at a place called Shillburn, and is wounded, but not dangerously. He lies at Dr. Butler’s, in the city of Chester.”

“Yours, most truly,

“J. B.”

The next morning my uncle and aunt arrived, and found me sitting, crying, at George’s bedside. He had begun to speak to me, but so incoherently, that I weened he had lost his senses altogether; and, when thinking it was on my account, I fell a weeping bitterly. Just then my uncle and aunt entered, and, rushing to the side of the bed, accosted their son, time about, in the most anxious manner. He regarded them not, but stared the other way, as if something had perplexed him.

“For your own sakes, and for mine, do not disturb him,” said I. “Dr. Butler’s orders are, that he be kept perfectly quiet.”

“Where is the wound?” asked my uncle, in a whisper. I told him. “And what was the quarrel about?” said he.

“It was about me,” said I. “What else did you think cousin George would quarrel about?”

“You? You minx! You runagate from all decency and decorum,” exclaimed my aunt, with great vehemence. “You seem to have been born for the disgrace and ruin of our house.”

“Who says that?” cried George, in a voice of frenzy, and sitting up in the bed. “Who speaks in that style to my Mary? Bring me my whip, and I’ll give him another flogging. No; bring me my pistols—my pistols!—*my* pistols! I say she was born to be an honour and a blessing to our family, if it had not been for you—you dog!”

He then fell back upon the bed, uttering loud moans, while my aunt howled outright. Dr. Butler then rushed into the room, and compelled my uncle and aunt to retire; and he would never suffer them again to enter, telling them that I was the best, the most patient, and most attentive nurse, that their son

could get in all England. George recovered but very slowly, which was wonderful, as the wound was really nothing. My aunt sent word to my father, who came down, and railed on me in a shameful manner; but I had not a word to say, I had behaved so ill, and had been so terribly unlucky in my love adventures. I was brought up in the assurance that I was a GREAT BEAUTY. Of course, my mind was stored with vanity and romance; and I wanted to make a dash some way or other. I had a longing for notoriety, which I could not resist; and the circumstance of my writing this narrative is a proof that it remains in my nature to this day.

From the time that my cousin came so opportunely to my rescue at Leicester, I resolved to repay him with my hand and heart, if ever he again asked them. He did so, and we were married; and now, when I have long lost him, I must say, that that fellow, with the white greasy-coloured face, the large mouth, and the heavy, unmoving eyelids, was the bravest, the kindest, the most benevolent being, and the best-bred, most complete gentleman, I have ever known. Alas! I enjoyed his fellowship only for a short space. He died suddenly on the 8th of November, 1814, and left me a wealthy widow, without any family; but I shall venerate his memory while I live.

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## THE TRIAL.

(FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF A DECEASED LAWYER.)

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It has frequently occurred to me, that if any member of the Bar, who has been for a few years in practice in our criminal courts, possessing the not uncommon qualities of a moderate understanding, a mind open to conviction, and a tolerable share of attention to the cases which occur, would communicate to the world the result of his experience, he would do more to enlighten the public mind upon the nature and practical operation of that most valued of our institutions—the Trial by Jury—than could be effected in any other mode. No man can have attended, even for a single day, either as a juror or a witness, in any one of our courts, whether civil or criminal, without having been struck, if he be of an observant habit, by verdicts utterly at variance with the facts upon which those verdicts have been founded.

One of the most extraordinary and most interesting trials of which I find any account in my note-book, took place on the Northern Circuit, very little less than fifty years ago. It is instructive in many points of view. To those who believe that they see the finger of Providence especially pointing out the murderer, and guiding, in a slow but unerring course, the footsteps of the avenger of blood, it will afford matter of deep meditation and reflection.

In the year 17—, John Smith (I use fictitious names) was indicted for the wilful murder of Henry Thomson. The case was one of a most extraordinary nature, and the interest excited by it was almost unparalleled. The accused was a gentleman of

considerable property, residing upon his own estate, in an unfrequented part of —shire. A person, supposed to be an entire stranger to him, had, late in a summer's day, requested and obtained shelter and hospitality for the night. He had, it was supposed, after taking some slight refreshment, retired to-bed in perfect health, requesting to be awakened at an early hour the following morning. When the servant, appointed to call him, entered his room for that purpose, he was found in his bed, perfectly dead; and, from the appearance of the body, it was obvious that he had been so for many hours. There was not the slightest mark of violence on his person, and the countenance retained the same expression which it had borne during life. Great consternation was, of course, excited by this discovery, and inquiries were immediately made—first, as to who the stranger was—and, secondly, as to how he met with his death. Both were unsuccessful. As to the former, no information could be obtained—no clue discovered to lead to the knowledge either of his name, his person, or his occupation. He had arrived on horseback, and was seen passing through a neighbouring village about an hour before he reached the house where his existence was so mysteriously terminated, but could be traced no farther. Beyond this, all was conjecture.

With respect to the death, as little could be learned as of the dead man; it was, it is true, sudden—awfully sudden; but there was no reason, that alone excepted, to suppose that it was caused by the hand of man, rather than by the hand of God. A coroner's jury was, of course, summoned; and after an investigation, in which little more could be proved than that which I have here stated, a verdict was returned to the effect that the deceased *died by the visitation of God*. Days and weeks passed on, and little further was known. In the mean time, rumour had not been idle: suspicions, vague, indeed, and undefined, but of a dark and fearful character, were, at first, whispered, and afterwards boldly expressed. The precise object of these suspicions was not clearly indicated; some implicated one person, some another: but they all pointed to Smith, the master of the house, as concerned in the death of the stranger. As usual in such cases, circumstances totally unconnected with the transaction in

question, matters many years antecedent, and relating to other persons, as well as other times, were used as auxiliary to the present charge. The character of Smith, in early life, had been exposed to much observation. While his father was yet alive, he had left his native country, involved in debt, known to have been guilty of great irregularities, and suspected of being not over-scrupulous as to the mode of obtaining those supplies of money of which he was continually in want, and which he seemed somewhat inexplicably to procure.

“ And he had left in youth his father-land ;  
But from the hour he waved his parting hand  
Each trace wax'd fainter of his course, till all  
Had nearly ceased his memory to recall.  
His sire was dust ; his vassals could declare,  
'Twas all they knew, that Lara was not there :  
Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew  
Cold in the many, anxious in the few.

“ He came at last in sudden loneliness,  
And whence they knew not, why they need not guess ;  
They more might marvel, when the greeting's o'er,  
Not that he came, but came not long before.  
Years had roll'd on, and fast they speed away  
To those that wander, as to those that stay.  
He came ; nor yet is past his manhood's prime,  
Though sear'd by toil, and something touch'd by time.”

Ten years and more had elapsed since his return ; and the events of his youth had been forgotten by many, and to many were entirely unknown : but, on this occasion, they were revived, and, probably, with considerable additions ; and, in fine, the magistrates were induced to commit Mr. Smith to gaol, to take his trial for the wilful murder of Henry Thomson. As it was deemed essential to the attainment of justice, to keep secret the examination of the witnesses who were produced before the magistrates, all the information of which the public were in possession, before the trial took place, was that which I have here narrated. Such was the state of things upon the morning of

the trial. Seldom, perhaps, had speculation been so busy as it was upon this occasion. Wagers to a considerable amount were depending upon the event of the case; so lightly do men think and act with reference to matters in which they are not personally concerned, even though the life of a fellow-creature is involved in the issue.

Lord Mansfield's charge to the Grand Jury upon the subject of this murder excited a good deal of attention. He had recommended them, if they entertained reasonable doubts of the sufficiency of the evidence to ensure a conviction, to throw out the *bill*; explaining to them most justly and clearly that, in the event of their doing so, if any additional evidence should, at a future time, be discovered, the prisoner could again be apprehended and tried for the offence; whereas, if they found a true Bill, and, from deficiency of proof, he was now acquitted on his trial, he could never again be molested, even though the testimony against him should be morally as clear as light. The grand jury after, as was supposed, very considerable discussion among themselves, and, as was rumoured, by a majority of only one, returned a *true bill*. After the charge, it was conjectured that the proofs offered to the Grand Jury must have been strong to authorise such a finding; and a strong impression in consequence prevailed that there would ultimately be a conviction.

The Counsel for the prosecution opened his case to the jury in a manner that indicated very little expectation of a conviction. He began by imploring them to divest their minds of all that they had heard before they came into the box: he entreated them to attend to the evidence, and judge from that alone. He stated that, in the course of his experience, which was very great, he had never met with a case involved in deeper mystery than that upon which he was then addressing them. The prisoner at the bar was a man moving in a respectable station in society, and maintaining a fair character. He was, to all appearance, in the possession of considerable property; and was above the ordinary temptations to commit so foul a crime. With respect to the property of the deceased, it was strongly suspected that he had either been robbed of, or in some inexplicable manner made away with, gold and jewels to a very large amount; yet, in candour, he was

bound to admit that no portion of it, however trifling, could be traced to the prisoner. As to any motive of malice or revenge, none could by possibility be assigned; for the prisoner and the deceased were, as far as could be ascertained, total strangers to each other. Still there were most extraordinary circumstances connected with his death, pregnant with suspicion at least, and imperiously demanding explanation; and it was justice, no less to the accused than to the public, that the case should undergo judicial investigation. The deceased Henry Thomson was a jeweller, residing in London, wealthy, and in considerable business; and, as was the custom of his time, in the habit of personally conducting his principal transactions with the foreign merchants with whom he traded. He had travelled much in the course of his business in Germany and Holland; and it was to meet at Hull a trader of the latter nation, of whom he was to make a large purchase, that he had left London a month before his death. It would be proved by the landlord of the inn where he had resided, that he and his correspondent had been there; and a wealthy jeweller of the town, well acquainted with both parties, had seen Mr. Thomson after the departure of the Dutchman; and could speak positively to there being then in his possession jewels of large value, and gold, and certain bills of exchange, the parties to which he could describe. This was on the morning of Thomson's departure from Hull, on his return to London, and was on the day but one preceding that on which he arrived at the house of the prisoner. What had become of him in the interval could not be ascertained; nor was the prisoner's house situated in the road which he ought to have taken. No reliance, however, could be placed on that circumstance; for it was not at all uncommon for persons who travelled with property about them, to leave the direct road, even for a considerable distance, in order to secure themselves as effectually as possible from the robbers by whom the remote parts of the country were greatly infested. He had not been seen from the time of his leaving Hull till he reached the village next adjoining Smith's house, and through which he passed, without even a momentary halt. He was seen to alight at Smith's gate, and the next morning was discovered dead in his bed. He now came to the most extraor-



dinary part of the case. It would be proved, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that the deceased died by *poison*—poison of a most subtle nature, most active in its operation, and possessing the wonderful and dreadful quality of leaving no external mark or token by which its presence could be detected. The ingredients of which it was composed were of so sedative a nature, that, instead of the body on which it had been used exhibiting any contortions, or marks of suffering, it left upon the features nothing but the calm and placid quiet of repose. Its effects, and indeed its very existence, were but recently known in this country, though it had for some time been used in other nations of Europe; and it was supposed to be a discovery of the German chemists, and to be produced by a powerful distillation of the seed of the wild cherry-tree, so abundant in the Black Forest.

But the fact being ascertained, that the cause of the death was poison, left open the much more momentous question,—by whom was it administered? It could hardly be supposed to be by the deceased himself; there was nothing to induce such a suspicion; and there was this important circumstance, which of itself almost negatived its possibility, that no phial, or vessel of any kind, had been discovered, in which the poison could have been contained. Was it then the prisoner who administered it? Before he asked them to come to that conclusion, it would be necessary to state more distinctly what his evidence was. The prisoner's family consisted only of himself, a housekeeper, and one man-servant. The man-servant slept in an out-house adjoining the stable, and did so on the night of Thomson's death. The prisoner slept at one end of the house, and the housekeeper at the other, and the deceased had been put into a room adjoining the housekeeper's. It would be proved, by a person who happened to be passing by the house on the night in question, about three hours after midnight, that he had been induced to remain and watch, from having his attention excited by the circumstance, then very unusual, of a light moving about the house at that late hour. That person would state most positively, that he could distinctly see a figure, holding a light, go from the room in which the prisoner slept to the housekeeper's room; that two persons then came out of the housekeeper's room, and

The light disappeared for a minute. Whether the two persons went into Thomson's room he could not see, as the window of that room looked another way; but in about a minute they returned, passing quite along the house to Smith's room again; and in about five minutes the light was extinguished, and he saw it no more.

Such was the evidence upon which the magistrates had committed Smith; and, singularly enough, since his committal the housekeeper had been missing, nor could any trace of her be discovered. Within the last week, the witness who saw the light had been more particularly examined; and, in order to refresh his memory, he had been placed, at dark, in the very spot where he had stood on that night, and another person was placed with him. The whole scene, as he had described it, was acted over again; but it was utterly impossible, from the cause above-mentioned, to ascertain, when the light disappeared, whether the parties had gone into Thomson's room. As if, however, to throw still deeper mystery over this extraordinary transaction, the witness persisted in adding a new feature to his former statement: that after the persons had returned with the light into Smith's room, and before it was extinguished, he had twice perceived some dark object to intervene between the light and the window, almost as large as the surface of the window itself, and which he described by saying, it appeared as if a door had been placed before the light. Now, in Smith's room, there was nothing which could account for this appearance: his bed was in a different part; and there was neither cupboard nor press in the room, which, but for the bed, was entirely empty, the room in which he dressed being at a distance beyond it. He would state only one fact more (said the learned Counsel), and he had done his duty: it would then be for the Jury to do theirs. Within a few days there had been found, in the prisoner's house, the stopper of a small bottle of a very singular description; it was apparently not of English manufacture, and was described, by the medical men, as being of the description used by chemists to preserve those liquids which are most likely to lose their virtue by exposure to the air. To whom it belonged, or to what use it had been applied, there was no evidence to show.

Such was the address of the Counsel for the prosecution ; and, during its delivery, I had earnestly watched the countenance of the prisoner, who had listened to it with deep attention. Twice only did I perceive that it produced in him the slightest emotion. When the disappearance of his housekeeper was mentioned, a smile, as of scorn, passed over his lip ; and the notice of the discovery of the stopper obviously excited an interest, and, I thought, an apprehension ; but it quickly subsided. I need not detail the evidence that was given for the prosecution : it amounted, in substance, to that which the counsel stated ; nor was it varied in any particular. The stopper was produced, and proved to be found in the house ; but no attempt was made to trace it to the prisoner's possession, or even knowledge.

When the case was closed, the learned Judge, addressing the counsel for the prosecution, said, he thought there was hardly sufficient evidence to call upon the prisoner for his defence ; and if the Jury were of the same opinion, they would at once stop the case. Upon this observation from the Judge, the Jury turned round for a moment, and then intimated their acquiescence in his Lordship's view of the evidence. The Counsel folded up their briefs, and a verdict of acquittal was about to be taken, when the prisoner addressed the court. He stated, that having been accused of so foul a crime as murder, and having had his character assailed by suspicions of the most afflicting nature, that character could never be cleared by his acquittal upon the ground that the evidence against him was inconclusive, without giving him an opportunity of stating his own case, and calling a witness to counteract the impressions that had been raised against him, by explaining those circumstances which, at present, appeared doubtful. He urged the learned Judge to permit him to state his case to the Jury, and to call his housekeeper, with so much earnestness, and was seconded so strongly by his counsel, that Lord Mansfield, though very much against his inclination, and contrary to his usual habit, gave way, and yielded to the request.

*"Dii faciles—torrens dicendi copia multis."*

The prisoner then addressed the Jury, and entreated their pa-

tience for a short time. He repeated to them that he never could feel satisfied to be acquitted, merely because the evidence was not conclusive; and pledged himself, in a very short time, by the few observations he should make, and the witness whom he should call, to obtain their verdict upon much higher grounds—upon the impossibility of his being guilty of the dreadful crime. With respect to the insinuations which had been thrown out against him, he thought one observation would dispose of them. Assuming it to be true that the deceased died from the effect of, a poison, of which he called God to witness that he had never even heard either the name or the existence until this day, was not every probability in favour of his innocence? Here was a perfect stranger, not known to have in his possession a single article of value, who might either have lost, or been robbed of that property which he was said to have had at Hull. What so probable as that he should, in a moment of despair at his loss, have destroyed himself? The fatal drug was stated to have been familiar in those countries in which Mr. Thomson had travelled, while to himself it was utterly unknown. Above all, he implored the Jury to remember, that although the eye of malice had watched every proceeding of his since the fatal accident, and though the most minute search had been made into every part of his premises, no vestige had been discovered of the most trifling article belonging to the deceased, nor had even a rumour been circulated that poison of any kind had been ever in his possession. Of the stopper, which had been found, he disowned all knowledge; he declared, most solemnly, that he had never seen it before it was produced in court; and he asked, could the fact of its being found in his house, only a few days ago, when hundreds of people had been there, produce upon an impartial mind even a momentary prejudice against him? One *fact*, and one only, had been proved, to which it was possible for him to give an answer—the fact of his having gone to the bed-room of his housekeeper on the night in question. He had been subject, for many years of his life, to sudden fits of illness; he had been seized with one on that occasion, and had gone to her to procure her assistance in lighting a fire. She had returned with him to his room for that purpose, he having waited for a minute in the

passage whilst she put on her clothes, which would account for the momentary disappearance of the light; and after she had remained in his room a few minutes, finding himself better, he had dismissed her, and retired again to-bed, from which he had not risen when he was informed of the death of his guest. It had been said that, after his committal to prison, his housekeeper had disappeared. He avowed that, finding his enemies determined, if possible, to accomplish his ruin, he had thought it probable they might tamper with his servant: he had, therefore, kept her out of their way; but for what purpose? Not to prevent her testimony being given, for she was now under the care of his solicitor, and would instantly appear for the purpose of confirming, as far as she was concerned, the statement which he had just made.

Such was the prisoner's address, which produced a very powerful effect. It was delivered in a firm and impressive manner, and its simplicity and artlessness gave it an appearance of truth. The housekeeper was then put into the box, and examined by the Counsel for the prisoner. According to the custom, at that time almost universal, of excluding witnesses from court until their testimony was required, she had been kept at a house near at hand, and had not heard a single word of the trial. There was nothing remarkable in her manner or appearance; she might be about thirty-five, or a little more; with regular though not agreeable features, and an air perfectly free from embarrassment. She repeated, almost in the prisoner's own words, the story that he had told of his having called her up, and her having accompanied him to his room, adding that, after leaving him, she had retired to her own room, and been awakened by the man-servant in the morning, with an account of the traveller's death. She had now to undergo a cross-examination; and I may as well state here that which, though not known to me till afterwards, will assist the reader in understanding the following scene:—The Counsel for the prosecution had, in his own mind, attached considerable importance to the circumstance mentioned by the witness who saw the light, that while the prisoner and the housekeeper were in the room of the fornicer, something like a door had intervened between the candle and the window,

which was totally irreconcilable with the appearance of the room when examined; and he had half-persuaded himself that there must be a secret closet which had escaped the search of the officers of justice, the opening of which would account for the appearance alluded to, and the existence of which might discover the property which had so mysteriously disappeared. His object, therefore, was to obtain from the housekeeper (the only person except the prisoner who could give any clue to this) such information as he could get, without alarming her by any direct inquiry on the subject, which, as she could not help seeing its importance, would have led her at once to a positive denial. He knew, moreover, that as she had not been in court, she could not know how much or how little the inquiry had already brought to light; and by himself treating the matter as immaterial, he might lead her to consider it so also, and, by that means, draw forth all that she knew. After some few unimportant questions, he asked her, in a tone and manner calculated rather to awaken confidence than to excite distrust,—

During the time you were in Mr. Smith's room, you stated that the candle stood on the table, in the centre of the room? —Yes.

Was the closet, or cupboard, or whatever you call it, opened *once*, or *twice*, while it stood there?—A pause: no answer.

I will call it to your recollection: after Mr. Smith had taken the medicine out of the closet, did he shut the door, or did it remain open?—He shut it.

Then it was opened again for the purpose of replacing the bottle, was it?—It was.

Do you recollect how long it was open the last time?—Not above a minute.

The door, when open, would be exactly between the light and the window, would it not?—It would.

I forget whether you said the closet was on the right, or left, hand side of the window?—The left.

Would the door of the closet make any noise in opening?—None.

Can you speak positively to that fact? Have you ever opened

it yourself, or only seen Mr. Smith open it?—I never opened it myself.

Did you never keep the key?—Never.

Who did?—Mr. Smith always.

At this moment the witness chanced to turn her eyes towards the spot where the prisoner stood, and the effect was almost electrical. A cold damp sweat stood upon his brow, and his face had lost all its colour; he appeared a living image of death. She no sooner saw him than she shrieked, and fainted. The consequences of her answers flashed across her mind. She had been so thoroughly deceived by the manner of the advocate, and by the little importance he had seemed to attach to her statements, that she had been led on, by one question to another, till she had told him all that he wanted to know. During the interval (occasioned by her illness) to the proceedings, the solicitor for the prosecution left the court. It was between four and five o'clock when the Judge resumed his seat upon the bench, the prisoner his station at the bar; and the housekeeper hers in the witness-box: the court, in the interval, had remained crowded with the spectators, scarce one of whom had left his place, lest, during his absence, it should be seized by some one else.

The cross-examining Counsel then addressed the witness:—I have very few more questions to ask of you; but beware that you answer them truly, for your own life hangs upon a thread.

Do you know this stopper?—I do.

To whom does it belong?—To Mr. Smith.

When did you see it last?—On the night of Mr. Thomson's death.

At this moment the solicitor for the prosecution entered the court, bringing with him, upon a tray, a watch, two money-bags, a jewel-case, a pocket-book, and a bottle of the same manufacture as the stopper, and having a cork in it; some other articles there were in it, not material to my story. The tray was placed on the table in sight of the prisoner and the witness; and from that moment not a doubt remained in the mind of any man of the guilt of the prisoner.—A few words will bring my tale to its close. The house where the murder had been committed was between nine and ten miles distant. The solicitor,

as soon as the cross-examination of the housekeeper had discovered the existence of the closet, and its situation, had set off on horseback, with two sheriff's officers, and, after pulling down part of the wall of the house, had detected this important place of concealment. Their search was well rewarded: the whole of the property belonging to Mr. Thomson was found there, amounting, in value, to some thousand pounds; and, to leave no room for doubt, a bottle was discovered, which the medical men instantly pronounced to contain the very identical poison which had caused the death of the unfortunate Thomson. The result is too obvious to need explanation.

The case presents the, perhaps, unparalleled instance of a man accused of murder, the evidence against whom was so slight as to induce the Judge and Jury to concur in a verdict of acquittal; but who, persisting in calling a witness to prove his innocence, was, upon the testimony of that very witness, *convicted and executed.*

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## THE MISERIES OF ARTIFICIAL TEETH.

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EVERY one has, it is said, one's misfortune, a favourite grievance, which grows to a head, withdrawing the attention from other evils, and carrying off the discontents of the system,—a sort of healthy disease, if I may so express it. So *Ætna* and *Hecle* have been called safety-valves of the earth, great pimples, which every now and then relieve our venerable mother from a too great heat of the system. My pimple, or safety-valve, has been my teeth, or rather, my want of teeth; true, I have had what some may think greater misfortunes; I have lost money—much more than was convenient; have lost friends also; and, perhaps, I may say, consequently, I have lost an eye, and three fingers on the sword-hand by the cut of a sabre. Some people would call these greater misfortunes. Bah! They did not hinder me from eating, talking, and laughing, as usual; but when I lost my teeth—my invaluable *incisores* and *molares*, and, by the rigid laws of society, was obliged to supply their place with false ones, then, indeed, and for the first time, I felt what is meant by the troubles of life, and such like lugubrious phrases;—then, when an embargo was laid on my mouth, and I could not eat, talk, or laugh as I had been used to do, my fortitude was shaken, and I felt that man is, indeed, born to trouble. But I believe it is usual, in a piece of autobiography, for the reader to be introduced, with more or less of form, to the writer. Briefly then, to my intimates, and at the Club generally, I am Jack Webster merely,—to the rest of the world, my name and addition are Major Webster of the — Regiment of the line; pretty well known, I believe, as a Sub in the Peninsular War, a Captain at

Waterloo, and, since peace, a Major,—though peace itself has been war to the Major, as you shall see. More I say not on this head; the intelligent reader will pick up an idea of my character, as he will surely sympathise with my misfortunes, in the course of the following narrative. No one, as I have said, knew less of pain and grief than I did before I lost my teeth,—those “inestimable instruments of mastication, utterance, and beauty,” as they are styled in the *affiches* of advertising dentists. Since then I am certainly, in some sort, an altered man. How far I am excusable, from the circumstances of the case, I now proceed to show:—

About five years ago, (I am now five-and-forty, or thereabout,) I first perceived little dusky specks between my front teeth, and shortly after, on the occasion of a sharp but temporary bout of illness, felt a tenderness about my gums, and found that my teeth, like those of a portcullis, had a tendency to drop,—this I mentioned to my medical man, who, after examining them closely, told me, with all the cold-blooded precision which they affect on these occasions, that he thought it more than probable that I should “not be able to save them!”—Not save them! Heaven and earth! the idea of being toothless had never seriously, and to its full extent, occurred to me for a moment. This my *Mephistophiles* of a doctor well knew, and stood grinning at my consternation, much like his prototype in the inimitable *Designs* of Retzsch,—the twenty-third of the series, I think it is. However, his prediction was true; out they all came,—not all at one time, however,—and only in the upper jaw; but the front teeth in this all deserted, on different occasions, in the course of a few weeks. One—the first, a front tooth—I shall never forget it—came out as I was sucking an orange; and not being sufficiently on my guard, went down my throat before I was aware of anything being the matter; I felt it, indeed, rather scrape on my *œsophagus* as it passed, but thought I had only swallowed a pip, or some such matter; my tongue, however, soon detected the gap that was left, and told me—more gently, certainly, than any other tongue could do—the grievous event that had happened. To be brief, they all followed, one after another; not, I mean, down my throat; I was too much on my guard for that;

for though teeth are the necessary instruments of digestion, they are not, I believe, very digestible things themselves. But this was only a *foretaste* of what I was doomed to suffer, as you shall see. When I next saw the doctor, I told him what had happened, which, indeed, it was not possible for me to open my mouth without doing; when he told me, with another Mephistophelian smile, that it was of no great consequence, as I could easily get a new set. This idea was some comfort to me at the moment; unfortunately people catch at straws, and are easily made grateful, for I almost forgave him the display of his own firm white set with which he conveyed the intelligence to me; though it was, I am now sure, at the thought of the unknown misery I was going to endure in the wearing of artificial teeth. Next morning, my mouth muffled up, and squeezed into the corner of my cab, I droye to Mr. —, the fashionable dentist in — Street. The case was a clear one; not a peg (or a stump) to hang a doubt upon. I must have “a whole set,” or “an under and upper piece,” as they are technically called. Such was the decision—disinterested one, no doubt—of the man of teeth. Here I would fain give to the uninitiated reader an idea of the dire and complicated piece of machinery which was proposed to me; but no,—my graphic powers are, I feel, quite unequal to the task. To the inquisitive loiterer through the streets of London, who has ever been drifted by the current of Sydney’s Alley and St. Martin’s Court, into the neighbourhood of May’s Buildings, little explanation will be necessary; and I think it better to refer those who would have an adequate idea of what sort of “infernal machines” some people carry about with them in their mouths, to this place, which is the market for this kind of ware—the Bezes-teen of tooth-drawers. Here, on every hand, are to be seen glass cases filled with all sorts and descriptions of this precious merchandise, “from a single tooth to a full set,” grinning insultingly, in all the pride of white and scarlet, on the toothless passenger; but many cannot, or will not, visit the shops of these plebeian tooth-drawers; let them imagine, then, a something which presents to the sight about so much of the teeth and gums as are to be seen when the lips are drawn forcibly back, called in English a “piece, or set;” and at Paris somewhat more elegantly

“ *un râtelier*.” It consists of two parts,—the *cadre* or frame, and the teeth themselves; the former is a piece of metal, or of the tusk of the hippopotamus, or of the walrus, made to fit in some degree to the gums, and a part of the roof; to this human teeth are usually riveted, though sometimes, to save expense, the material of the frame itself is employed. In order to keep this machine from falling out of the mouth, which, from its weight and bulk, it has a strong propensity to do, a stiff spiral wire spring is employed; one of which is attached on each side of the two pieces, and unites them, so that when the teeth are put into their natural posture, the springs being bent back into the hollow of the cheek, force the two pieces against the upper and lower jaws respectively, and keep the whole apparatus in its place, that is, until something disturbs it, and after all, in a most uncomfortable and precarious state. All this, and much more, I learned on my first visit to the dentist; quite enough, indeed, to open my eyes to the unfortunate situation in which I was placed. I went home, therefore, in no very jocund mood, pondering over, and balancing the dire alternatives that were before me—no easy matter to decide! On one hand the question was no less than to pass the remainder of my days with a mouth filled with metal plates, spiral springs, and dead men’s teeth; on the other, to give up *talking, laughing, flirting*, in short, the world—retire to some “nook merely monastick,” and feed on pottage and batter puddings—“a trim reckoning!” For a whole week I mused and calculated the sacrifices on either side; the scales so nearly balanced that each alternately seemed going down. The world, with a thing nearly as big as a musical snuff-box in one’s mouth, (*che boccone!*) or a hermitage with toothless gums, that was the question. Society, I well knew, by its rigid code, allows no one with any conspicuous personal defects, remediable or not, to join its ranks; and a blotched face, or a broken mouth, would exclude a man from many circles more decidedly than doubtful acts, or a broken reputation. This may be very right, at least so far as regards the disqualifying character of personal defects; at any rate, I, who had been a strict disciplinarian in this matter, had no right to expect any special indulgence in my own favour. At last the world prevailed; I was only forty, had always lived

in society; postponed—not given up matrimony; I felt, too, like a soldier, ashamed of a retreat; and thought, with my experience and *savoir vivre*, under all disadvantages the last chances of the game were still worth playing for.

The next morning, accordingly, I drove to my dentist's again, seated myself with a kind of desperate courage in his vile operating fauteuil, and told him to proceed; in five minutes he was prepared, and at my side, with a large lump of bees-wax in his hand. This he stuffed into my mouth, pressing against the roof and gums, to get, as he said, a form or mould for a model of the *locale*. No very pleasant operation this,—a man's hand, and half a pound of bees-wax, for some minutes together, in one's mouth,—half-stifled, and hardly able to restrain an insurrectionary disposition in the stomach, to explode all his wax-work in his face. A detail, however, is impossible of half the annoyances to be endured between the initiative process of "taking the model," and the completion of the work. A week at least elapses; and three or more of these purgatorial sort of operations. But my job was finished, and the engine was jammed between my jaws, with about the same sort of sensation on my part, as I suppose a young horse feels when the breaker's bit is first brought into his mouth. Imagine, ye who never experienced the like,—for I shall never be able to describe it,—what I felt on finding my mouth full of metal plates, strong wire springs, and teeth that ought to have been lying quietly with their original owners in some neighbouring church-yard,—a combination of physical and moral annoyances, that can hardly be equalled, I think, in the class of minor evils, as they are called. From this time I was an altered man; looks, manners, temper, all gave way in some degree, and my spirit was fairly broken in by this vile "bit" in my mouth. My friends all observed an extraordinary change in me; from gay to grave, from talk to taciturnity,—and puzzled themselves mightily about the cause. Some guessed one thing, some another. I had something on my conscience, seemed to be the general opinion. Some crime committed in my youth, remorse for which had at last overtaken me. Some were content to say I was only suffering the usual consequences of early debauchery and hard drinking: I was guiltless, in all and every re-

spect; but I said nothing. I had only to open my mouth to clear up my character and explain everything, but I prudently preferred to keep my mouth shut, and suffer in silence. All my attempts to return to my former habitudes, and regain my place in society, were in vain; the difficulties I had to contend with were too much for me; and after struggling with them for a twelve-month, I gave it up, and made a retreat to a small and tolerant circle of old friends and relations in a provincial city.

\* I shall here describe a few of the difficulties and annoyances which I have endured, to show the world that I am not the chicken-hearted fellow that some have supposed, or have yielded to slight or imaginary evils. I shall give these instances of my sufferings without any order or connection, save that in which they shall occur to my memory, and shall add, perhaps, before I conclude, some part of the mass of information which I have gained in the course of my experience in the matter of artificial teeth. The subject is not without its curious points, its arcana. Some are piquant enough, and even border on the horrid; they are also for the most part little known, *une lettre close* to the multitude. They can only be known by personal experience, and are seldom communicated; for vanity, a better guard than masonic oaths, keeps the secret. And first, for my personal annoyances. A man's mouth is useful in so many ways (a woman's certainly not less so), that to have, as it were, a padlock put on it, and all its functions embargoed, must, it is clear, be no trifling calamity; thus I found, so soon as my mouth was fitted up with the diabolical machinery which I have been describing, that, besides the misery of such a mouthful, I could neither eat nor talk with any degree of ease or security; laughing was quite out of the question, though I confess I had not much disposition to exercise the faculty just at that time. After a short period, however, I thought I would make trial of the efficiency of my new weapons, and make my first essays at the club and in a few morning calls. The results, however, were by no means so encouraging as to induce me to venture on the more arduous field-day of a dinner, or evening society; for though the click of my metallic mouth-piece was perhaps audible only to my own watchful ears, yet now and then the spiral springs,

which should remain curved in the hollow of the cheek, escaped and sprang forward, projecting between my lips like the gold and silver out of the good girl's mouth in the fairy tale, and often resisted all my efforts, with my handkerchief to my mouth, to force it back into its place again. On one of these occasions, my friends seeing me, with my eyes rolling about, and unable to speak, thought I was going to be choked; and one old lady, in her fright, gave me some hard thumps on the back, by way of relieving me. What could I do with half-a-dozen astonished faces turned towards me? Explanation was impossible; I could not utter a word. A hasty and unexplained retreat was the only course that my military or social tactics could suggest; this I effected, and through the doorway too, though I should not have refused the window; and would have given my half-year's pay to have been able to descend through a trap-door in the floor, like the ghost in Hamlet, veiled in blue smoke. On another occasion, while talking with some acquaintances at the door of our club, a sudden inclination to yawn, not prudently resisted or in time, again threw all my tackle into disorder, and I remained for some time a silent, though not very attentive, listener to a political discussion in which I had been taking an active part. My silence at last, and projecting lips, drew upon me the scrutinizing eyes of my companions; if I had attempted to speak, I should certainly have delivered something much more solid and sterling than is usually depicted in such conversations; but then my secret would infallibly have come out, clattering upon the pavement, like Belphegor, when told that his wife was a-coming. A thought, however, luckily occurred to me—the cholera, which was then rife in the land. Screwing up my face, therefore, as if in great pain, and pressing my hand against my epigastrium, I hobbled off, without looking to the right hand or to the left, as if labouring under an incipient stage of the epidemic. My escape, however, was not yet complete. I was still in the street, and almost certain of meeting some acquaintance, for few men have a greater number. I therefore continued my retreat into the Park, where, thinking myself secure from observation, I relieved my mouth of its burden, and proceeded to re-adjust and replace my teeth according to the directions of my dentist, in such



case made and provided,—namely, by placing the springs backward, and then pressing the two pieces together, in the natural position, with the forefinger and thumb of each hand—back it into its place in my mouth again. But all this is not done by an inexperienced hand in a moment; it took me some time, and so absorbed my attention, that I did not observe a group of nursemaids who had approached the part of the garden where I stood, and who were stilling their little ones, to have a better view of what I was about. At last, as I was cautiously raising my double set of teeth to place it in my mouth—lifting up my eyes in the operation—I beheld half-a-dozen funny faces peeping at me over each other's shoulders, and only waiting that signal to burst into a general laugh. Here no generalship could be of any avail—a retreat, anyhow, was the only thing to be thought of; so, without any more ado, I crammed my teeth into my pocket, and made off as fast as I could, reaching home luckily without meeting any one to speak to. I cannot pretend, however, to detail all, or half of what I suffered in this way. At last I resolved on leaving London. Whatever has been connected with our griefs seems a part or a cause of them. I would try country air—the sea air—Madeira—the Cape—anywhere—to escape from my annoyances; and indeed it was necessary to think of getting away, at least for a season, for my acquaintances began to whisper about that there was something not quite right about me. If they had said that all was not right in my head, they would not have been far from the truth. *Enfin*, I thought of a sea-bathing place in Wales, where, unknown and unquizzed, I might practise on this new mouth-organ of mine at leisure, and prepare myself to return to the world by degrees. I chose Aberystwith, and inquired for a quiet boarding-house. I can't live alone,—that's the devil of it. Nothing to fear here, thought I, when I saw my fellow-boarders: three or four old ladies—fixtures—such as always form the nucleus of these establishments; an East Indian; an old Irish doctor; and a banker, and his wife and daughter (with his cursed political economy), from the neighbourhood of Cirencester. But who can conceal anything from the scrutiny of a regular boarding-house old lady's eye? Before three days were over they had found out my secret, and watched every mouthful

I took, with the kind expectation of seeing my teeth tumble into my plate, tried to make me talk for the same benevolent purpose, and inquired, very significantly, if I was ever troubled with the toothache? Use, however, had now begun to lessen the piquancy of these and similar annoyances. We soon get accustomed to, and indulgent in our own defects; besides, my tongue and lips were now drilled into better management of the new-comers, over which they stood guard unceasingly, the tongue especially, who was constantly going his rounds, to feel that all was right, or re-adjust any disorder that had taken place. Still I was then, and for the next two or three years, constantly meeting with accidents and *contre-temps* with my borrowed teeth, of which my space will only allow me the brief mention of a few, as *échantillons*, of the mass of miseries I have endured from this prolific cause.

On one occasion, I recollect being at the opera with some ladies. Hanging over the front of the box for a moment, to see who were in the house, and speaking at the same time, out sprang my unlucky teeth, and fell into the pit. Without any explanation (what could I say without my teeth?) I hurried down, and though the alley was much crowded, began to search quietly for my lost property. The men standing there supposed at first that I had dropped a glove, or some such matter, and took little notice of me. At last I caught sight of my set of teeth, partly concealed under the shoe of an officer in the Guards. The avidity with which I begged him to move his foot and picked it up, excited their notice, and made them think that I had found something of value. They began to feel for their snuff-boxes, etc.; and one of them, thinking that he missed his box, followed me into the corridor, and requested to see what I had found. I refused, of course: high words ensued; and a crowd came round us to see what was the matter. The affair was awkward enough, and I was completely at a loss what to do. Seeing, however, an officer of police coming up, I took him aside, and showing him the cause of all the hubbub, desired him to inform the gentleman that the property was mine, and of no sort of value to anybody but the owner; and of not much to him! he might have added. I stood aloof while this explanation was

made, and heard him exclaim, "But what is it, then? why can't I see it?" The man, finding no other way out of the affair, whispered something—the bare fact, I suppose—into his ear, which was immediately followed by a rather indecorous laugh, as it seemed to me; the disposition to which, before I could get out of hearing, was rapidly extending itself among the bystanders.

On another occasion, I was staying at a friend's house in the country. On going to bed, I placed my set of teeth, as was usual with me, on the table of my dressing-room. I had not been long asleep, when I was awakened by a noise, which, I soon found, was made by the favourite spaniel of the lady of the house; but what had brought him to my dressing-room I could not guess. I rose, however, and, just as I was, took the lamp, and went to turn him out; when, lo, and behold! there was little Fidèle with my set of teeth in his mouth, gnawing away merrily at them under the table. It was a set, the frame of which was made of the tusk of the hippopotamus, and he had taken it, I suppose, for a bone; follow him I must, for how could I carry on the war without my teeth, and a house full of ladies? Not being well acquainted, however, with the geography of the back-staircases, I stumbled, threw down the lamp, and brought out all the servants and the master of the house, to see what was the matter. There was I in my night gear and red kerchief bound round my head, and brandishing an umbrella, which I had snatched up in my hurry to make the beast refund my grinders; vexed as I was, I could not help joining in the laugh which my picturesque figure occasioned. The affair, however, was no joke to me, and this I was obliged to explain to the assembled night-caps, who, as soon as they were informed of the case, instantly gave chase, in full cry, for the recovery of my teeth. The spaniel dodged us some time; but being hard pressed, stood at last at bay, at the door of his mistress's bed-chamber, still holding his bone, as he thought it, between his teeth; being a pet dog, no one dared to touch him, for fear of offending my lady, into whose fair hands alone, and after much coaxing, he consented to give up his prize. Of course the affair was no secret at the breakfast-table next morning, and the grave congratulations

were not few which I received at the success of the chase of the night before. I will mention one more of my misfortunes in this way, and that of a somewhat less vexatious character, or, at least, in which the expense of the ludicrous did not fall wholly on me,—one of the city companies (I don't exactly know which), bearing at the least their share of it, and thus it fell out. One Lord Mayor's day, I was coaxed by two young nieces into taking them to see the procession, "the Show," as it is still called; and accordingly procured a seat at the rich silversmith's first floor window in Cheapside: well, when the show made its appearance, I, with one on each side of me, and all our necks stretched out of the window, was playing the part of showman, and explaining, as well as I could make it out, the "order of the course," when, at a very exciting part of the pageant—the men in armour I think—down fell my unfortunate teeth perpendicularly into the street; they did not reach the ground, however, on this occasion; for it so happened that one of Birch's men was passing just at that moment, with a large jar of mock-turtle on his head, ordered for some city company, to form a part, and a favourite one I understand, of a grand dinner they gave on this occasion. My little nieces laughed like mad things, and I too: indeed the affair was not very serious so far as I was concerned; for this set of teeth had done hard duty, and were getting rather too old and discoloured to be worn much longer; and so much the worse, I am obliged to confess, for the glass-cutters' company (or whichever it was, who had this windfall added to their annual banquet). I am, perhaps, rather scrupulous on some points, and thought it right, on this occasion, to send a servant after the man to bring him and the soup back again; but Birch's man was self-willed, or perhaps much hurried on a Lord Mayor's day; for on he went his way in spite of my message, and the destiny of the worshipful company was fulfilled. I was really concerned at this part of the adventure; for I am fond of mock-turtle myself. It was some alleviation, however, to think that, as the specific gravity of my *dents postiches* was much greater than that of the turtle soup; (for I saw it plainly sinking between the pieces of floating fat and forced-meat balls), unless they should eat very gluttonously, and reach the bottom of

the tureen, the addition which I had made to the soup would not be apparent; and, on the other hand, if they should eat their way to the bottom, and perceive something suspicious lying there, it would not be until the pleasure of eating (the main point in a city feast I take it) had been actually "had and received;" and no one would then think of refunding, at least on a point of delicacy; and besides, the uninitiated in artificial teeth had never, perhaps, seen such a production of art before, and might easily mistake it for a part of the calf's head, which the cook, much hurried on a Lord Mayor's day, had baled out of the copper by mistake.

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## ARASMANES; OR, THE SEEKER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PELHAM," ETC.

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IN the broad plains of Chaldæa, and not the least illustrious of those shepherd-sages, from whom came our first learning of the lights of heaven, the venerable Chosphor saw his age decline into the grave. Upon his death-bed he thus addressed his only son, the young Arasmanes—in whose piety he recognised, even in that gloomy hour, a consolation and a blessing; and for whose growing renown for wisdom and for valour the faint pulses of expiring life yet beat with paternal pride.

"Arasmanes," said he, "I am about to impart to you the only secret which, after devoting eighty years to unravel the many mysteries of knowledge, I consider worthy of transmitting to my child. Thou knowest that I have wandered over the distant regions of the world, and have experienced, with all the vicissitudes, some of the triumphs, and many of the pleasures, of life. Learn, from my experience, that earth possesses nothing which can reward the pursuit, or satisfy the desire. When you see the stars shining down upon the waters, you behold an image of the visionary splendours of hope: the light sparkles on the wave; but it neither warms while it glitters, nor can it, for a single instant, arrest the progress of the stream from the dark gulf into which it hastens to merge itself, and be lost. It was not till my old age that this conviction grew upon my mind; and, about that time, I discovered, from one of the sacred books to which my studies were then applied, the secret I am now about to confide to thy ear. Know, my son, that, in the extremities of Asia, there is a garden in which the God of the Uni-

verse placed the first parents of mankind. In that garden the sun never sets; nor does the beauty of the seasons wane. *There* is neither ambition, nor avarice, nor false hope, nor its child—regret. *There* is neither age nor infirmity; diseases are banished from the air; eternal youth, and the serenity of an unbroken happiness, are the prerogative of all things that breathe therein. For a mystic and unknown sin our first parents were banished from this happy clime, and their children scattered over the earth. Superhuman beings are placed at its portals, and clouds and darkness veil it from the eyes of ordinary men. But, to the virtuous and to the bold, there is no banishment from the presence of God; and by them the darkness may be penetrated, the dread guardians softened, and the portals of the divine land be passed. Thither, then, my son—early persuaded that the rest of earth is paved with sorrow and with care—thither, then, bend thy adventurous way. Fain could I have wished that, in my stronger manhood, when my limbs could have served my will, I had learned this holy secret, and repaired in search of the ancestral clime. Avail thyself of my knowledge; and, in the hope of thy happiness, I shall die contented.” The pious son pressed the hand of his sire, and promised obedience to his last command.

“But, oh, my father!” said he, “how shall I know in what direction to steer my course? To this land who shall be my guide, or what my clue? Can ship built by mortal hands anchor at its coast; or can we say to the camel-driver, ‘Thou art approaching to the goat?’”

The old man pointed to the east.

“From the east,” said he, “dawns the sun—type of the progress of the mind’s light: from the east comes all of science that we know. Born in its sultry regions, seek only to pierce to its extreme; and, guiding thyself by the stars of heaven ever in one course, reach at last the ADEN that shall reward thy toils.”

And Chospor died, and was buried with his fathers.

After a short interval of mourning, Arasmanes took leave of his friends; and, turning his footsteps to the east, sought the gates of Paradise.

He travelled far, and alone, for several weeks; and the stars were his only guides.

By degrees, as he progressed, he found that the existence of Aden was more and more acknowledged. Accustomed from his boyhood to the companionship of sages, it was their abodes that he sought in each town or encampment through which the wanderer passed. By them his ardour was confirmed; for they all agreed in the dim and remote tradition of some beautiful region in the farthest east, from which the existing races of the earth were banished, and which was jealously guarded from profane approach by the wings of the spirits of God. But, if he communicated to any one his daring design, he had the mortification to meet only the smile of derision, or the incredulous gaze of wonder: by some he was thought a madman, and by others an impostor. So that, at last, he prudently refrained from revealing his intentions, and contented himself with seeking the knowledge, and listening to the conjectures, of others.

At length the traveller emerged from a mighty forest, through which, for several days, he had threaded his weary way; and beautiful beyond thought was the landscape that broke upon his view. A plain, covered with the richest verdure, lay before him; through the trees that here and there darkened over the emerald ground were cut alleys, above which arched festoons of many-coloured flowers, whose hues sparkled amidst the glossy foliage, and whose sweets steeped the air as with a bath. A stream, clear as crystal, flowed over golden sands; and, wherever the sward was greenest, gathered itself into delicious fountains, and sent upward its dazzling spray, as if to catch the embraces of the sun, whose beams kissed it in delight.

The wanderer paused in ecstasy; a sense of luxurious rapture, which he had never before experienced, crept into his soul. "Behold!" murmured he, "my task is already done; and Aden, the land of happiness and of youth, lies before me!"

While he thus spake, a sweet voice answered—"Yes, O happy stranger!—thy task is done: this is the land of happiness and of youth!"

He turned, and a maiden of dazzling beauty was by his side. "Enjoy the present," said she, "and so wilt thou defy the future. Ere yet the world was, Love brooded over the unformed shell, till from beneath the shadow of his wings burst forth the



life of the young creation. Love, then, is the true God, and whoso serveth him he admits into the mysteries of a temple erected before the stars. Behold! thou enterest now upon the threshold of the temple; thou art in the land of happiness and youth!"

Enchanted with these words, Arasmanes gave himself up to the sweet intoxication they produced upon his soul. He suffered the nymph to lead him deeper into the valley; and now, from a thousand vistas in the wood, trooped forth beings, some of fantastic, some of the most harmonious, shapes. There was the satyr and the faun, and the youthful Bacchus—mixed with the multiform deities of India, and the wild objects of Egyptian worship; but more numerous than all were the choral nymphs, that spiritualised the reality by incorporating the dreams of beauty; and, wherever he looked, one laughing face seemed to peer forth from the glossy leaves, and to shed, as from its own joyous yet tender aspect, a tenderness and a joy over all things; and he asked how this being, that seemed to have the power of multiplying itself every where, was called? And its name was Eros.

For a time, the length of which he knew not—for in that land no measurement of time was kept—Arasmanes was fully persuaded that it was Aden to which he had attained. He felt his youth as if it were something palpable; every thing was new to him—even in the shape of the leaves, and the whisper of the odorous airs, he found wherewithal to marvel at and admire. Enamoured of the maiden that had first addressed him, at her slightest wish (and she was full of all beautiful caprices) he was ready to explore even the obscurest recess in the valley which now appeared to him unbounded. He never wearied of a single hour. He felt as if weariness were impossible; and, with every instant, he repeated to himself, "In the land of happiness and youth I am a dweller."

One day, as he was conversing with his beloved, and gazing upon her face, he was amazed to behold that, since the last time he had gazed upon it, a wrinkle had planted itself upon the ivory surface of her brow; and, even while half doubting the evidence of his eyes, new wrinkles seemed slowly to form over the forehead, and the transparent roses of her cheek to wane

and fade! He concealed, as well as he could, the mortification and wonder that he experienced at this strange phenomenon; and, no longer daring to gaze upon a face from which before he had drank delight as from a fountain, he sought excuses to separate himself from her, and wandered, confused and bewildered with his own thoughts, into the wood. The fauns, and the dryads, and the youthful face of Bacchus, and the laughing aspect of Eros, came athwart him from time to time; yet the wonder that had clothed them with fascination was dulled within his breast. Nay, he thought the poor wine-god had a certain vulgarity in his air, and he almost yawned audibly in the face of Eros.

And now, whenever he met his favourite nymph—who was as the queen of the valley—he had the chagrin to perceive that the wrinkles deepened with every time; youth seemed rapidly to desert her; and, instead of a maiden scarcely escaped from childhood, it was an old coquet that he had been so desperately in love with.

One day he could not resist saying to her, though with some embarrassment—

“Pray, dearest, is it many years that you have inhabited this valley?”

“Oh, indeed, many!” said she, smiling.

“You are not, then, very young?” rejoined Arasmanes, ungallantly.

“What!” cried the nymph, changing colour—“Do you begin to discover age in my countenance? Has any wrinkle yet appeared upon my brow? You are silent. Oh, cruel Fate! will you not spare even this lover?” And the poor nymph burst into tears.

“My dear love,” said Arasmanes, painfully, “it is true that time begins to creep upon you; but my friendship shall be eternal.”

Scarcely had he uttered these words when the nymph, rising, fixed upon him a long, sorrowful look, and then, with a loud cry, vanished from his sight. Thick darkness, as a veil, fell over the plains; the NOVELTY of life, with its attendant, POETRY, was gone from the wanderer's path for ever.

A sudden sleep crept over his senses. He awoke confused and

unrefreshed, and a long and gradual ascent, but over mountains green indeed, and watered by many streams gushing from the heights, stretched before him. Of the valley he had mistaken for Aden not a vestige remained. He was once more on the real and solid earth.

For several days, discontented and unhappy, the young adventurer pursued his course, still seeking only the east, and still endeavouring to console himself for the sweet delusions of the past by hoping an Aden in the future.

The evening was still and clear; the twilight star broke forth over those giant plains—free from the culture and the homes of men, which yet make the character of the Eastern and early world; a narrow stream, emerging from a fissure in a small rock covered with moss, sparkled forth under the light of the solemn heavens, and flowed far away, till lost amongst the gloom of a mighty forest of palms. By the source of this stream sat an aged man and a young female. And the old man was pouring into his daughter's ear—for Azraaph held to Ochtor that holy relationship—the first doctrines of the world's wisdom; those wild but lofty conjectures by which philosophy penetrated into the nature and attributes of God; and reverently the young maiden listened, and meekly shone down the star of eve upon the dark yet lustrous beauty of her earnest countenance.

It was at this moment that a stranger was seen descending from the hills that bordered the mighty plains; and he, too, worn and tired with long travel, came to the stream to refresh his burning thirst, and lave the dust from his brow.

He was not at first aware of the presence of the old man and the maiden; for they were half concealed beneath the shadow of the rock from which the stream flowed. But the old man, who was one of those early hermits with whom wisdom was the child of solitude, and who, weary with a warring and savage world, had long since retired to a cavern not far from the source of that stream, and dwelt apart with Nature—the memories of a troubled Past, and the contemplation of a mysterious Future,—the old man, I say, accustomed to proffer to the few wanderers that, from time to time, descended the hills (seeking the cities of

the east), the hospitalities of food and shelter, was the first to break the silence.

Arasmanes accepted with thankfulness the offers of the hermit, and that night he became Ochtor's guest. There were many chambers in the cavern, hollowed either by the hand of nature, or by some early hunters on the hill; and into one of these the old man, after the Chaldæan had refreshed himself with the simple viands of the hermitage, conducted the wanderer: it was covered with dried and fragrant mosses; and the sleep of Arasmanes was long, and he dreamed many cheerful dreams.

When he rose the next morning, he found his entertainers were not within the cavern. He looked forth, and beheld them once more by the source of the stream, on which the morning sun shone, and round which fluttered the happy wings of the desert birds. The wanderer sought his hosts in a spot on which they were accustomed, morning and eve, to address the Deity. "Thou dost not purpose to leave us soon," said the hermit; "for he who descends from yon mountains must have traversed a toilsome way, and his limbs will require rest."

Arasmanes, gazing on the beauty of Azraaph, answered: "In truth, did I not fear that I should disturb thy reverent meditations, the cool of the plains and the quiet of thy cavern, and, more than all, thy converse and kind looks, would persuade me, my father, to remain with thee many days."

"Behold how the wandering birds give life and merriment to the silent stream!" said the sage; "and so to the solitary man are the footsteps of his kind." And Arasmanes sojourned with Ochtor, the old man.

"This, then, is thy tale," said Ochtor; "and thou still believest in the visionary Aden of thy father's dreams. Doubtless such a land existed once for our happier sires; or why does tradition preserve it to the race that behold it not? But the shadow wraps it, and the angel guards. Waste not thy life in a pursuit, without a clue, for a goal that thou never mayest attain. Lose not the charm of earth in seeking after the joys of Aden. Tarry with us, my son, in these still retreats. This is the real Aden of which thy father spake; for here comes neither passion nor care.

The mortifications and the disappointments of earth fall not upon the recluse. Behold, my daughter hath found favour in thine eyes—she loveth thee—she is beautiful, and tender of heart. Tarry with us, my son, and forget the lessons that thy sire, weary with a world which he yet never had the courage to quit, gave thee from the false wisdom of Discontent.”

“Thou art right, venerable Ochtor,” cried Arasmanes, with enthusiasm; “give me but thy daughter, and I will ask for no other Aden than these plains.”

The sun had six times renewed his course, and Arasmanes still dwelt in the cave of Ochtor. In the fair face of Azraaph he discovered no wrinkles—her innocent love did not pall upon him; the majestic calm of Nature breathed its own tranquillity into his soul; and in the lessons of Ochtor he took a holy delight. He found in his wisdom that which at once stilled the passions and inspired the thoughts. At times, however, and of late more frequently than ever, strong yearnings after the Aden he had so vainly pursued were yet felt. He felt that curse of monotony, which is the invariable offspring of quiet.

At the end of the sixth year, as, one morning, they stood without the door of the cavern, and their herds fed tranquilly around them, a band of men from the western hills came suddenly in view: they were discovered before they had time to consider whether they should conceal themselves; they had no cause, however, for fear—the strangers were desirous only of food and rest.

Foremost of this band was an aged man of majestic mien, and clothed in the richest garments of the East. Loose flowed his purple robe, and bright shone the jewels on the girdle that clasped his sword. As he advanced to meet Ochtor, upon the countenance of each of the old men grew doubt, astonishment, recognition, and joy. “My brother!” burst from the lips of both, and the old chief fell upon Ochtor’s bosom, and wept aloud. The brothers remained alone the whole day, and at nightfall they parted with many tears; and Zanielides, the son of the chief (who was with the band), knelt to Ochtor, and Ochtor blessed him.

Now when all were gone, and silence once more slept upon

the plains, Ochtor went forth alone, and Azzaaph said unto her husband:—"My father's mind seems disquieted and sad; go forth, I pray thee, my beloved, and comfort him; the dews lie thick upon the grass, and my father is very old." By the banks of the stream stood Ochtor, and his arms were folded on his breast; the river-horses were heard snorting in the distance, and the wild zebras came to drink at the wave; and the presence of the beasts made more impressive the solitude of the old man.

"Why art thou disquieted, my father?" said Arasmanes.

"Have I not parted with my near of kin?"

"But thou didst never hope to meet them; and are not thy children left thee?"

Ochtor waved his hand with an unwonted impatience.

"Listen to me, Arasmanes. Know that Zamiel and I were brothers. Young and ardent, each of us aspired to rule our kind, and each of us imagined he had the qualities that secure command; but, mark, my arm was the stronger in the field, and my brain was the subtler in the council. We toiled and schemed, and rose into repute among our tribe; but envy was busy with our names. Our herds were seized—we were stripped of our rank—we were degraded to the level of our slaves. Then, disgusted with my race, I left their cities, and, in these vast solitudes, I forgot ambition in content. But my brother was of more hopeful heart; with a patient brow he veiled the anger he endured. Lo, he hath been rewarded! His hour came—he gathered together his friends in secret—he smote our enemies in the dead of night; and at morning, behold, he was hailed chieftain of the tribe. This night he rides with his son to the king of the City of Golden Palaces, whose daughter that son is about to wed. Had I not weakly renounced my tribe—had I not fled hither, that glorious destiny would have been mine; I should have been the monarch of my race, and my daughter have matched with kings. Marvellest thou now that I am disquieted, or that my heart is sore within me?"

And Arasmanes saw that the sage had been superior to the world only while he was sickened of the world.

And Ochtor nourished the discontent he had formed to his

dying day; and, within three months from that night, Arasmanes buried him by the source of the solitary stream.

The death of Ochtor, and his previous confession, deeply affected Arasmanes. He awoke as from a long sleep. Solitude had lost its spell; and he perceived that inactivity itself may be the parent of remorse. "If," thought he, "so wise, so profound a mind as that of Ochtor was thus sensible to the memories of ambition,—if, on the verge of death, he thus regretted the solitude in which he had buried his years, and felt, upon the first tidings from the great world, that he had wasted the promise and powers of life, how much more accessible should I be to such feelings, in the vigour of manhood, and with the one great object, which I swore to my father to pursue, unattained and even unattempted? Surely it becomes me to lose no longer time in these houseless wastes; but to rise and gird up my loins, and seek, with Azraaph my wife, for that Aden which we will enter together!"

These thoughts soon ripened into resolve; and not the less soon in that, Ochtor being dead, Arasmanes had now no companion for his loftier and more earnest thoughts. Azraaph was beautiful and gentle; but the moment he began to talk about the stars, she unaffectedly yawned in his face. She was quite contented with the solitude, for she knew of no other world; and the herds, and the streamlet, and every old bush around the cavern, were society to her; but her content, as Arasmanes began to discover, was that of ignorance, and not of wisdom.

Azraaph wept bitterly on leaving the cavern; but by degrees, as they travelled slowly on, the novelty of what they saw reconciled her to change; and, except at night, when she was weary of spirit, she ceased to utter her regrets for the stream and the quiet cave. They travelled eastward for several weeks, and met with no living thing by the way, save a few serpents, and a troop of wild horses. At length, one evening, they found themselves in the suburbs of a splendid city. As they approached the gates they drew back, dazzled with the lustre, for the gates were of burnished gold, which shone bright and glittering as they caught a sunny light from the lamps of naphtha, that hung, frequent, from the mighty walls.

They inquired, as they passed the gates, the name of the city; and they heard, with some surprise, and more joy, that it was termed "The City of Golden Palaces."

"Here, then," cried Azraaph, "we shall be well received; for the son of my father's brother is wedded to the daughter of the king."

"And here, then, will be many sages," thought Arasmanes, "who will, doubtless, have some knowledge of the true situation of Aden."

They were much struck, as they proceeded through the streets, with the bustle, and life, and animation, that reigned around, even at that late hour. With the simplicity natural to persons who had lived so long in a desert, they asked at once for the king's palace. The first time Arasmanes asked, it was of a young lord, who, very sumptuously dressed, was treading the streets with great care, lest he should soil the hem of his robe. The young lord looked at him with grave surprise, and passed on. The next he asked was a rude boor, who was carrying a bundle of wood on his shoulders. The boor laughed in his face; and Arasmanes, indignant at the insult, struck him to the ground. There then came by a judge, and Arasmanes asked him the same question.

"The king's palace!" said the judge; "and what want ye with the king's palace?"

"Behold, the daughter of the king is married to my wife's cousin."

"Your wife's cousin! Thou art mad to say it; yet stay, thou lookest poor, friend (here the judge frowned terribly). Thy garments are scanty and worn. I fancy thou hast neither silver nor gold."

"Thou sayest right," replied Arasmanes; "I have neither."

"Ho, ho!" quoth the judge; "he confesses his guilt; he owns that he has neither silver nor gold. Here, soldiers, seize this man and woman. Away with them to prison; and let them be brought up for sentence of death to-morrow. We will then decide whether they shall be hanged or starved. The wretches have, positively, neither silver nor gold; and, what is worse, they own it!"



"Is it possible!" cried the crowd; and a shudder of horror crept through every by-stander. "Away with them!—away with them! Long life to Judge Kaly, whose eye never sleeps, and who preserves us for ever from the poor!"

The judge walked on, shedding tears of virtuous delight at the reputation he had acquired.

Arasmanes and Azraaph were hurried off to prison, where Azraaph cried herself to sleep, and Arasmanes, with folded arms and downcast head, indulged his meditations on the very extraordinary notions of crime that seemed common to the sons of the City of Golden Palaces. They were disturbed the next morning by loud shouts beneath the windows of the prison. Nothing could equal the clamour that they heard; but it seemed the clamour of joy. In fact, that morning, the princess, who had married Azraaph's cousin, had been safely brought to-bed of her first child; and great was the joy and the noise throughout the city. Now, it was the custom in that country, whenever any one of the royal family was pleased to augment the population of the world, for the father of the child to go round to all the prisons in the city, and release the prisoners. What good fortune for Arasmanes and Azraaph that the princess had been brought to-bed before they were hanged!

And by-and-by, amidst cymbal and psalter, with banners above him and spears around, came the young father to the jail in which our unfortunate couple were confined.

"Have you any extraordinary criminals in your prison?" asked the prince of the head jailor; for he was studying, at that time, to be affable.

"Only one man, my lord, who was committed last night; and who absolutely confessed, in cold blood and without torture, that he had neither silver nor gold. It is a thousand pities that such a miscreant should be suffered to go free!"

"You are right," said the prince; "and what impudence, to confess the crime! I should like to see so extraordinary a man."

So saying, the prince dismounted, and followed the jailor to the cell in which Arasmanes and his wife were confined. They recognised their relation at once; for, in that early age of the

world, people in trouble had a wonderfully quick memory in recollecting relatives in power. Azraaph ran to throw herself on the prince's neck (which the guards quickly prevented), and the stately Arasmanes began to utter his manly thanks for the visit.

"These people are mad," cried the prince, hastily. "Release them; but let me escape first." So saying, he ran down the stairs so fast that he nearly broke his neck; and then, mounting his horse, pursued his way to the other prisons, amidst the shouts of the people.

Arasmanes and Azraaph were now turned out into the streets. They were exceedingly hungry; and they went into the first baker's shop they saw, and asked the rites of hospitality

"Certainly; but your money, first," said the baker.

Arasmanes, made wise by experience, took care not to reply that he had no money; "but," said he, "I have left it behind me at my lodging. Give me the bread now, and, lo! I will repay thee to-morrow."

"Very well," said the baker; "but that sword of yours has a handsome hilt: leave it with me till you return with the moneys."

So Arasmanes took the bread, and left the sword.

They were now refreshed, and resolved to leave so dangerous a city as soon as they possibly could, when, just as they turned into a narrow street, they were suddenly seized by six soldiers, blindfolded, gagged, and hurried away, whither they knew not. At last they found themselves ascending a flight of stairs. A few moments more, and the bandages were removed from their mouths and eyes, and they saw themselves in a gorgeous chamber, and alone in the presence of the prince, their cousin.

He embraced them tenderly. "Forgive me," said he, "for appearing to forget you; but it was as much as my reputation was worth in this city to acknowledge relations who confessed to have neither silver nor gold. By the beard of my grandfather! how could you be so imprudent? Do you not know that you are in a country in which the people worship only one deity, the god of the precious metals? Not to have the precious metals is not to have virtue; to confess it is to be an atheist. No

power could have saved you from death, either by hanging or starvation, if the princess, my wife, had not been luckily brought to-bed to-day."

"What a strange—what a barbarous country!" cried Arasmanes.

"Barbarous!" echoed the prince: "This is the most civilised people in the whole world—nay, the whole world acknowledges it. In no country are the people so rich, and, therefore, so happy. For those who have no money it is, indeed, a bad place of residence; for those who have, it is the land of happiness itself. Yes, it is the true Aden."

"Aden! What then, you, too, have heard of Aden?"

"Surely! and this is it—the land of freedom—of happiness—of gold!" cried the prince, with enthusiasm: "remain with us and see."

"Without doubt," thought Arasmanes, "this country lies in the far-east: it has received me inhospitably at first; but, perhaps, the danger I escaped was but the type and allegorical truth of the sworded angel of which tradition hath spoken. But," said he, aloud, "I have no gold, and no silver, O my prince!"

"Heed not that," answered the kind Zamielides: "I have enough for all. You shall be provided for this very day."

"But will not the people recognise me as the poor stranger?"

The prince laughed for several minutes so loudly, that they feared he was going into fits.

"What manner of man art thou, Arasmanes?" said he, when he was composed enough to answer. "Knowest thou not that the people of this city never know what a man has been when he is once rich? Appear to-morrow in purple, and they will never dream that they saw thee yesterday in rags."

The kind Zamielides, then, conducting his cousins into his own chamber, left them to attire themselves in splendid garments, which he had ordered to be prepared for them. He gave them a palace and large warehouses of merchandise. "Behold," said he, taking Arasmanes to the top of a mighty tower which overlooked the sea: "behold yonder ships that rise, like a forest of masts, from that spacious harbour: the six vessels with the

green flags are thine. I will teach thee the mysteries of Trade, and thou wilt soon be as wealthy as myself."

"And what is trade, my lord?" said Arasmanes.

"It is the worship that the people of this country pay to their god," answered the prince.

Arasmanes was universally courted; so wise, so charming a person had never appeared in the City of Golden Palaces; and as for the beauty of Azraaph, it was declared the very masterpiece of nature. Intoxicated with the homage they received, and the splendour in which they lived, their days glided on in a round of luxurious delight.

"Right art thou, O Zamielides!" cried Arasmanes, as his ships returned laden with new treasure; "the City of Golden Palaces is the true Aden."

Arasmanes had now been three years in the city; and you might perceive that a great change had come over his person: the hues of health had faded from his cheek; his brow was care-worn—his step slow—his lips compressed. He no longer thought that he lived in the true Aden; and yet, for Aden itself, he would scarcely have quitted the City of Golden Palaces. Occupied solely with the task of making and spending money, he was consumed with the perpetual fear of losing, and the perpetual anxiety to increase, his stock. He trembled at every darker cloud that swept over the heavens; he turned pale at every ruder billow that agitated the sea. He lived a life of splendid care; and the pleasures which relieved it were wearisome, because of their sameness. He saw but little of his once-idolized Azraaph. Her pursuits divided her from him. In so civilised a country they could not be always together. If he spoke of his ships, he wearied her to death; if she spoke of the festivals she had adorned, he was equally tired of the account.

The court was plunged in grief. Zamielides was seized with a fever. All the wise men attended him; but he turned his face to the wall, and died. Arasmanes mourned for him more sincerely than any one; for, besides that Arasmanes had great cause to be grateful to him, he knew, also, that, if any accident happened to his vessels, he had now no friend willing to supply the loss. This made him more anxious than ever about the safety

of his wealth. A year after this event, the king of the City of Golden Palaces thought fit to go to war. The war lasted four years; and two millions of men were killed on all sides. The second year, Arasmanes was at a splendid banquet given at the court. A messenger arrived, panting and breathless. A great battle at sea had been fought. Ten thousand of the king's subjects had been killed.

"But who won the battle?" cried the king.

"Your Majesty."

The air was rent with shouts of joy.

"One little accident only," continued the herald, "happened the next day. Three of the scattered war-ships of the enemy fell in with the vessels of some of our merchants, returning from Ophir, laden with treasure, and, in revenge, they burnt and sunk them."

"Were my ships of the number?" asked Arasmanes, with faltering tongue.

"It was of thy ships that I spoke," answered the messenger.

But nobody thought of Arasmanes, or of the ten thousand subjects that were killed. The city was out of its wits with joy that his Majesty had won the victory.

"Alas, I am a ruined man!" said Arasmanes, as he sat with ashes on his head.

"And we can give no more banquets," sighed his wife.

"And every body will trample upon us," said Arasmanes.

"And we must give up our palace," groaned the tender Azraaph.

"But one ship remains to me!" cried Arasmanes, starting up: "It is now in port. I will myself be its captain. I will sail myself with it to Ophir. I will save my fortunes, or perish in the attempt."

"And I will accompany thee, my beloved," exclaimed Azraaph, flinging herself on his neck; "for I cannot bear the pity of the wives whom I have outshone."

The sea was calm, and the wind favourable, when the unfortunate pair entered their last ship; and, for a whole week, the gossip at court was of the folly of Arasmanes, and the devotion of his wife.

They had not been many weeks at sea before an adverse wind set in, which drove them entirely out of their destined course. In vain the pilot toiled, and Arasmanes stormed: they were beaten eastward; and, at length, even the oldest and most experienced of the mariners confessed they had entered seas utterly unknown to them. Worn and wearied, when their water was just out, and their provisions exhausted, they espied land, and, at nightfall, the ship anchored on a green and pleasant shore. The inhabitants, half naked, and scarce escaped from the first savage state of nature, ran forth to meet and succour them. By mighty fires the seamen dried their wet garments, and forgot the hardships they had endured. They remained several days with the hospitable savages, repaired their vessel, and replenished its stores. But what especially attracted the notice of Arasmanes was the sight of some precious diamonds, which, in a rude crown, the chief of the savages wore on his head. He learned from signs, easy of interpretation, that these diamonds abounded in a certain island in the farthest east; and that, from time to time, large fragments of rock, in which they were imbedded, were cast upon the shore. But, when Arasmanes signified his intention to seek this island, the savages, by gestures of horror and dismay, endeavoured to denote the dangers that attended the enterprise, and to dissuade him from attempting it. Naturally bold, and consumed with his thirst for wealth, these signs made but little impression upon the Chaldean; and one fair morning he renewed his voyage. Steering perpetually towards the east, and, with favouring winds, they came, on the tenth day, in sight of a mighty rock, which shone far down over the waters with so resplendent a glory, as to dazzle the eyes of the seamen. Diamond and ruby, emerald and carbuncle, glittered from the dark soil of the rock, and promised to the heart of the humblest seaman the assurance of illimitable wealth. Never was human joy more ecstatic than that of the whole crew, as the ship neared the coast. The sea was, in this place, narrow and confined, the opposite shore was also in view—black, rugged, and herbless, with pointed rocks, round which the waves sent their white foam on high, guarding its drear approach: little recked they, however, of the opposite shore, as

their eyes strained towards "the Island of Precious Stones." They were in the middle of the strait, when, suddenly, the waters became agitated and convulsed; the vessel rocked to and fro; something glittering appeared beneath the surface; and, at length, they distinctly perceived the scales and tail of an enormous serpent.

Thereupon a sudden horror seized the whole crew; they recognised the truth of that tradition, known, then, to all seamen, that in the farthest east lived the vast Snake of the Ocean, whose home no vessel ever approached without destruction. All thought of the diamond rock faded from their souls. They fell at once upon their knees, and poured forth unconscious prayers. But high above all rose the tall form of Arasmanes: little cared he for serpent or tradition. Fame, and fortune, and life were set upon one cast. "Rouse thee!" said he, spurning the pilot, "or we drive upon the opposite shore. Behold, the island of inexhaustible wealth glows upon us!"

Scarce had the words left his lips, when, with a slow and fearful hiss, the serpent of the east seas reared his head from the ocean. Dark and huge as the vastest cavern in which ghoul or Afrite ever dwelt was the abyss of his jaws, and the lurid and terrible eyes outshone even the lustre of the diamond rock.

"I defy thee," cried Arasmanes, waving his sword above his head; when, suddenly, the ship whirled round and round; the bold Chaldæan was thrown with violence on the deck; he felt the waters whirl and blacken over him; and then all sense of life deserted him.

When he came to himself, Arasmanes was lying on the hot sands of the shore opposite to the Diamond Isle; wrecks of the vessel were strewed around him, and here and there the dead bodies of his seamen. But at his feet lay, swollen and distorted, the shape of his beautiful Azraaph, the sea-weeds twisted round her limbs, and the deformed shell-fish crawling over her long hair. And tears crept into the eyes of the Chaldæan, and all his old love for Azraaph returned, and he threw himself down beside her mangled remains, and tore his hair; the schemes of the later years were swept away from his memory like visions, and he remembered only the lone cavern and his adoring bride.

Time rolled on, and Azraaph was buried in the sands; and Arasmanes tore himself from the solitary grave, and, striking into the interior of the coast, sought once more to discover the abodes of men. He travelled far and beneath burning suns, and, at night, he surrounded his resting-places with a circle of fire, for the wild beasts and the mighty serpents were abroad; scant and unwholesome was the food he gleaned from the berries and rank roots that now and then were visible in the drear wastes through which he passed; and, in this course of hardship and travail, he held commune with his own heart. He felt as if cured for ever of the evil passions. Avarice seemed gone from his breast, and he dreamt that no unholy desire could succeed to its shattered throne.

One day, afar off in the desert, he descried a glittering cavalcade—glittering it was indeed, for the horsemen were clad in armour of brass and steel, and the hot sun reflected the array like the march of a river of light. Arasmanes paused, and his heart swelled high within him as he heard through the wide plains the martial notes of the trumpet and the gong, and recognised the glory and pomp of war.

The cavalcade swept on; and the chief, who rode at the head of the band, paused as he surveyed with admiration the noble limbs, and proud stature, and dauntless eye of the Chaldæan. The chief summoned his interpreters; and, in that age, the languages of the east were but slightly dissimilar, so that the chief of the warriors conversed easily with the adventurer. "Know," said he, "that we are bent upon the most glorious enterprise ever conceived by the sons of men. In the farthest east there is a land of which thy father may have informed thee—a land of perpetual happiness and youth, and its name is Aden." Arasmanes started; he could scarce believe his ears. The warrior continued—"We are of that tribe which lies nearest to the east, and this land is therefore a heritage which we, of all the earth, have the right to claim. Several of our youth have, at various times, attempted to visit it, but supernatural agents have repelled the attempt. Now, therefore, that I have succeeded to the throne of my sires, I have resolved to invade and to conquer it by force of arms. Survey my band.



Sawest thou ever, O Chaldæan, men of such limbs and stature, of such weapons of offence, and shields of proof? Canst thou conceive men more worthy of such a triumph, or more certain to attain it? Thou, too, art of proportions beyond the ordinary strength of men—thou art deserving to be one of us. Come, say the word, and the armourers shall clothe thee in steel, and thou shalt ride at my right hand.”

The neighing of the steeds, and the clangour of the music, and the proud voice of the chieftain, all inspired the blood of Arasmanes. He thought not of the impiety of the attempt—he thought only of the glory: the object of his whole life seemed placed within his reach. He grasped at the offer of the warrior; and the armourer clad him in steel, and the ostrich-plume waved over his brow, and he rode at the right hand of the warrior-king.

The armament was not without a guide; for, living so near unto the rising of the sun, what with others was tradition, with them was knowledge; and many amongst them had travelled to the site of Aden, and looked upon the black cloud that veiled it, and trembled at the sound of the rushing but invisible wings that hovered over.

Arasmanes confided to the warrior his whole history; they swore eternal friendship; and the army looked upon the Chaldæan as a man whom God had sent to their assistance. For, what was most strange, not one of the army ever seemed to imagine there was aught unholy or profane in the daring enterprise in which they had enlisted; accustomed to consider bloodshed a virtue, what was the crime of winning the gardens of Paradise by force?

Through wastes and deserts they held their way; and, though their numbers thinned daily by fatigue, and the lack of food, and the fiery breath of the burning winds, they seemed not to relax in their ardour, or to repine at the calamities they endured.

Darkness gloomed like a wall! From heaven to earth stretched the palpable and solid Night that was the barrier to the land of Aden. No object gleamed through the impenetrable blackness; from those summitless walls hung no banner;

no human champion frowned before the drear approach: all would have been silence, save that, at times, they heard the solemn rush as of some mighty sea; and they knew that it was the rush of the guardian wings.

The army halted before the darkness, mute and awed; their eyes recoiled from the gloom, and rested upon the towering crest and snowy plumage of their chief. And he bade them light the torches of naphtha that they had brought with them, and unsheath their swords; and, at the given sound, horseman and horse dashed in through the walls of night. For one instant, the torches gleamed and sparkled amidst the darkness, and were then suddenly extinguished; but, through the gloom, came one gigantic hand wielding a sword of flame, and, wherever it turned, man smote his nearest man—father perished by his son—and brother fell gasping by the death-stroke of his brother; shrieks and cries, and the trample of affrighted steeds, rung through the riven shade—riven only by that mighty sword as it waved from rank to rank, and the gloom receded from its rays.

At eve the work was done; a small remnant of the warriors, alone escaped from the general slaughter, lay exhausted upon the ground before the veil of Aden. Arasmanes was the last who lingered in the warring gloom; for, as he lay struggling beneath the press of dying and dead, the darkness had seemed to roll away, and, far into its depths, he caught one glimpse of the wonderful loveliness of Aden. There, over valleys covered with the greenest verdure, and watered by rivers without a wave, basked a purpling and loving sunlight, that was peaceful and cloudless, for it was the smile of God. And there were groups of happy beings scattered around, in whose faces was the serenity of unutterable joy; even at the mere aspect of their happiness, happiness itself was reflected upon the soul of the Chaldean, despite the dread, the horror, and the desolation of the hour. He stretched out his arms imploringly, and the vision faded for ever from his sight.

The king and all the principal chiefs of the army were no more, and, with one consent, Arasmanes was proclaimed their leader. Sorrowful and dejected, he conducted the humbled

remnant of the troop back, through the deserts, to the land they had so rashly left. Thrice on their return they were attacked by hostile tribes, but, by the valour and prudence of Arasmanes, they escaped the peril. They arrived at their native city, to find that the brother of their chief had seized the reins of government. The army, who hated him, declared for the stranger-chief who had led them home. And Arasmanes, hurried away by the prospect of power, consented to their will. A battle ensued; the usurper was slain; and Arasmanes, a new usurper, ascended the throne in his stead.

The Chaldean was no longer young; the hardships he had undergone in the desert had combined with the anxieties that had preyed upon him during his residence in the City of the Golden Palaces, to plant upon his brow, and in his heart, the furrows of untimely age. He was in the possession of all the sources of enjoyment, at that period when we can no longer enjoy. Howbeit, he endeavoured to amuse himself by his divan of justice, from which every body went away dissatisfied, and his banquets, at which the courtiers complained of his want of magnificence, and the people of his profligate expense. Grown wise by experience, he maintained his crown by flattering his army; and, surrounded by luxury, felt himself supported by power.

There came to the court of Arasmanes a strange traveller. He was a little old man, of plain appearance, but great wisdom; in fact, he was one of the most noted sages of the East. His conversation, though melancholy, had the greatest attraction for Arasmanes, who loved to complain to him of the business of royalty, and the tediousness of his life.

"Ah, how much happier are those in a humbler station!" said the king: "How much happier was I in the desert-cave, tending my herds, and listening to the sweet voice of Azraaph! Would that I could recall those days!"

"I can enable thee to do so, great king!" said the sage; "behold this mirror; gaze on it whenever you desire to recall the past; and whatever portion of the past you wish to summon to your eyes shall appear before you."

The sage did not deceive Arasmanes. The mirror reflected all

the scenes through which the Chaldæan had passed : now he was at the feet of Chosphor, a happy boy—now, with elastic hopes, entering into the enchanted valley of the Nymph ere yet he learned how her youth could fade—now he was at the source of the little stream, and gazing on the face of Azraaph by the light of the earliest star ; whatever of these scenes he wished to live over again reflected itself vividly in the magic mirror. Surrounded by pomp and luxury in the present, his only solace was in the past.

“ You see that I was right,” said he to the sage : “ I was much happier in those days ; else why so anxious to renew them ? ”

“ Because, O great king,” said the sage, with a bitter smile, “ you see them without recalling the feelings you then experienced as well as the scenes ; you gaze on the past with the feelings you *now* possess, and all that then made the prospect clouded is softened away by time. Judge for yourself if I speak true.” So saying, the sage breathed over the mirror, and bade Arasmanes look into it once more. He did so. He beheld the same scenes, but the illusion was gone from them. He was a boy once more ; but restlessness, and anxiety, and a thousand petty cares at his heart : he was again in the cave with Azraaph, but secretly pining at the wearisome monotony of his life : in all those scenes he now imagined the happiest he perceived that he had not enjoyed the *present* ; he had been looking forward to the future, and the dream of the unattainable Aden was at his heart. “ Alas ! ” said he, dashing the mirror into pieces, “ I was deceived ; and thou hast destroyed for me, O sage, even the pleasure of the past ! ”

Arasmanes never forgot the brief glimpse of Aden that he had obtained in his impious warfare ; and, now that the charm was gone from Memory, the wish, yet to reach the unconquered land, returned more powerfully than ever to his mind. He consulted the sage as to its possibility.

“ Thou canst make but one more attempt,” answered the wise man ; “ and in that I cannot assist thee ; but one who, when I am gone hence, will visit thee, shall lend thee her aid.”

“ Cannot the visitor come till thou art gone ? ” said Arasmanes.

"No, nor until my death," answered the sage.

This reply threw the mind of Arasmanes into great confusion. It was true that he nowhere found so much pleasure as in the company of his friend—it was his only solace; but then, if he could never visit Aden (the object of his whole life) until that friend were dead—the thought was full of affliction to him. He began to look upon the sage as an enemy, as an obstacle between himself and the possession of his wishes. He inquired every morning into the health of the sage; he seemed most provokingly strong. At length, from wishes for his death, dark thoughts came upon the Chaldean, and he resolved to expedite it. One night the sage was found dead in his bed: he had been strangled by the order of the king.

The very next day, as the king sat in his divan, a great noise was heard without the doors; and, presently, a hag, dressed in a white garment of foreign fashion, and of a hideous and revolting countenance, broke away from the crowd, and made up to the king. "They would not let me come to thee, because I am homely and aged," said she, in a shrill and discordant voice; "but I have been in a king's court before now!"

"What wantest thou, woman?" said Arasmanes; and he felt, as he spake, a chill creep to his heart.

"I am that visitor of which the wise man spake," said she; "and I would talk to thee alone."

Arasmanes felt impelled as by some mighty power which he could not withstand; he rose from his throne, the assembly broke up in surprise, and the hag was admitted alone to the royal presence.

"Thou wouldst re-seek Aden, the land of Happiness and Truth?" said she, with a ghastly smile.

"Ay," said the king, and his knees knocked together.

"I will take thee thither."

"And when?"

"To-morrow, if thou wilt!" and the hag laughed aloud. There was something in the manner, the voice, and the appearance of this creature, so disgusting to Arasmanes, that he could brook it no longer. Aden itself seemed not desirable with such a companion and guide.

Without vouchsafing a reply, he hastened from the apartment, and bade his guards to admit the hag no more to the royal presence.

The sleep of Arasmanes that night was unusually profound, nor did he awaken on the following day till late at noon. From that hour he felt as if some strange revolution had taken place in his thoughts. He was no longer desirous of seeking Aden: whether or not the apparition of the hag had given him a distaste of Aden itself, certain it was that he felt the desire of his whole life had vanished entirely from his breast; and his only wish now was to enjoy, as long and as heartily as he was able, the pleasures that were within his reach.

"What a fool have I been," said he, aloud, "to waste so many years in wishing to leave the earth! Is it only in my old age that I begin to find how much that is agreeable earth can possess?"

"Come, come, come!" cried a shrill voice; and Arasmanes, startled, turned round to behold the terrible face of the hag.

"Come!" said she, stamping her foot; "I am ready to conduct thee to Aden."

"Wretch!" said the king, with quivering lips, "how didst thou baffle my guards? But I will strangle every one of them!"

"Thou hast had enough of strangling," answered the crone, with a malignant glare. "Hast thou not strangled thy dearest friend?"

"What! tauntest thou me?" cried the king; and he rushed at the hag with his lifted sabre. The blade cut the air: the hag had shunned the blow; and, at the same moment, coming behind the king, she clasped him round the body, and fixed her long talons in his breast: through the purple robe, through the jewelled vest, pierced those vulture fangs, and Arasmanes shrieked aloud with the terror and the pain. The guards rushed in at the sound of his cry.

"Villains!" said he, as the cold drops broke from his brow, "would ye leave me here to be murdered? Hew down yon hell-hag; her death only can preserve life to you."

"We saw her enter not, O king," said the chief of the guards,

amazed; "but she shall now die the death." The soldiers, with one accord, made at the crone, who stood glaring at them like a hunted tigress.

"Fools!" said she, "know that I laugh alike at stone walls and armed men."

They heard the voice—they saw not whence it came—the hag had vanished.

The wound which the talons of this horrible visitor had made in the breast of the king refused to heal: it gave him excruciating anguish. The physicians tended him in vain; in vain, too, did the wise men preach patience and hope to him. What incensed him even more than the pain was the insult he had suffered—that such a loathsome and obscene wretch should dare to maim the person of a king!—the thought was not to be borne. But, what was most strange, the more pain the king suffered, the more did he endeavour to court pleasure: life never seemed so charming to him as at the moment when it became intolerable. His favourite courtiers, who had been accustomed to flatter his former weakness, and converse with him about the happiness of Aden, and the possibility of entering it, found that even to broach the subject threw their royal master into a paroxysm of rage. He foamed at the mouth at the name of Aden—he wished, nay, he endeavoured to believe, that there was no such place in the universe.

At length one physician, more sanguine than the rest, assured the king that he was able to cure the wound and relieve the pain.

"Know, O king," said he, "that in the stream of Athron, which runneth through the valley of Mythra, there is a mystic virtue to cure all the diseases of kings. Thou hast only to enter thy gilded bark, and glide down the stream for the space of twenty roods, scattering thine offering of myrrh and frankincense on the waters, in order to be well once more. Let the king live for ever!"

It was a dark, deep, and almost waveless stream; and the courtiers, and the women, and the guards, and the wise men, gathered round the banks; and the king, leaning on the physician, ascended his gilded bark; and the physician alone entered

the vessel with him—"For," said he, "the god of the stream loves it not to be profaned by the vulgar crowd; it is for kings only that it possesses healing virtue."

So the king reclined in the middle of the vessel, and the physician took the censer of precious odours; and the bark drifted down the stream, as the crowd wept and prayed upon the shore.

"Either my eyes deceive me," said the king, faintly, "or the stream seems to expand supernaturally, as into a great sea, and the shores on either side fade into distance."

"It is so," answered the physician.—"And seest thou yon arch of black rocks flung over the tide?"

"Ay," answered the king.

"It is the approach to the land that thou hast so often desired to reach: it is the entrance into Aden."

"Dog!" cried the king, passionately, "name not to me that hateful word."

As he spoke, the figure of the false physician shrunk in size; his robes fell from him,—and the king beheld, in his stead, the dwarfish shape of the accursed hag.

On drifted the vessel; and the crowd on the banks now beheld the hag seize the king in a close embrace: his shriek was wafted over the water, while the gorgeous vessel, with its silken streamers and gilded sides, sped rapidly through the black arch of rocks. As the bark vanished, the chasm of the arch closed in, and, the rocks uniting, presented a solid barrier to their gaze. But, piercing through the barrier, they shudderingly heard the ghastly laugh of the hag, as she uttered the one word—"NEVER!" And from that hour the king was seen no more.

And this is the true history of Arasmanes, the Chaldæan.

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## THE PARVENU COUNTESS.

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"How *is* her Ladyship?" asked a little, thin, old woman, bent double with age, and clothed in rusty mourning. "How *is* her Ladyship?" repeated the poor old creature with a hurried earnestness, and an emphasis so strong, that, like the knock on the Earl of Anketell's hall-door, which had preceded the question, it seemed impossible that the sound could have been caused by the emaciated and diminutive figure that stood at the portal.

"How *is* her Ladyship?—well, I like that!" replied a tall, corpulent servant, whose red swelling cheeks and thick purple lips gave an expression to his mockery somewhat between burly contempt and rage at being so seriously disturbed for nothing, and by nobody.

"How *is* her Ladyship?—well, what impudence the common people have come to!"

"My good fellow, I entreat you to answer me," said the old woman, her fine, sharp, and prominent old features, and large gray eyes casting forth an expression of imploring earnestness.

"My good fellow!—well, if I stand this from such as you, I'm —," muttered this surly porter, slamming the door in the poor creature's face.

The knock was repeated with redoubled energy, and the porter re-opened the door with a visible resolution to get rid of the intruder.

"Give your Lady this," said the old woman, thrusting towards him a sealed letter: "give her this, and, I assure you, she will be overjoyed to see me."

"My Lady never suffers us to take in begging letters."

"This is not a begging letter; and here is a half-crown for your trouble."

"Well, what impudence you beggars have come to! You are a genteeler beggar than I should have thought by your looks; but, my good woman, it is more than my place is worth to receive petitions from beggars."

"Stand aside! open the door! be quick! Here's my Lord and the Duke of —— coming down stairs!" said a lad in livery, whose countenance spoke a gentle nature,—that is, a nature not so long in office and authority as that of the surly porter of Lord Anketell's hall.

True it was that the stripling Duke of ——, who had just come into his immense estates after the nursings of a long minority, had terminated a pretty long interview with Lord Anketell, and his Lordship was accompanying his Grace from the drawing-room down stairs to the hall, and the servants had not been made aware of his approach. Some confusion and bustle took place; but the folding-doors were widely thrown open, six or seven servants, in their splendid liveries, hastily drew up in a double line, bowing profoundly to the peers as they passed between, and holding their breaths whilst his Lordship gave the Duke a shake of the hand—cordial and sincere in full proportion to his rank and unequalled affluence. It was in this scene of hurry and confusion that the little old woman in black had contrived to slip past the servants, through the door, without being perceived. She had flitted, with a witch-like rapidity suited to her strange figure, through the outer hall, had passed the vestibule and the great staircase, and had actually got into the inner hall, and at the foot of the back stairs, without being perceived. Here she met a maid-servant descending with a small silver tray of sandwiches and liqueur-glasses, and she immediately began to entreat her to take the letter to her Lady, offering the solitary half-crown as an inducement. The maid coolly put the half-crown in her pocket, and, reading contemptuously the superscription of the letter, threw it upon the tray, observing, as she passed, that it should be given to her Lady some time in the day, but she knew it would never be

opened, for letters "of that look" never were. It was at the moment when the old woman was sinking upon a bench, overcome with affliction, that the servants of the hall discovered her. They had missed her immediately the Duke had got into his cab; and, after staring in every direction, to their astonishment they beheld her sitting, as they thought, at her ease, in the inner hall.

"You impudent old wretch! how dare you get there?" cried the enraged porter, waddling to her, and seizing her by the shoulder to thrust her into the street. He had already pulled her to the foot of the grand staircase, when the woman thrust out her attenuated and withered arm, and grasped with her long thin fingers one of the volutes of a scagliola pedestal which supported a massive or-molu lamp.

"No power on earth shall force me hence! I will see Lady Anketell, or here I will die!" cried the old creature, with a tone which almost terrified the servants. There was something dreadfully impressive in it, and it appeared almost supernatural when its energy and resolution were contrasted with the form from which it proceeded.

The porter seized her shrivelled, spider-leg-like fingers, declaring, with an oath, that he would wrench them off, or crack her joints, if she did not let go her hold. He suited the word to the action, and evinced no symptom that he had uttered an idle threat. His thick lips became purple with rage; but his victim firmly retained her hold, and bit her under lip, that seemed more like parchment, while her eyes stared wildly at him, dilating as in the paroxysm of frenzy.

"For God's sake, Burton, don't break the poor old creature's wrist!—wait, and she will give way," said the lad we have before-mentioned; and he took hold of the sturdy arm of his fellow-servant to restrain his violence.

"Let go, or I will squeeze your very nails off," said the porter, and the woman uttered a faint screech, and her face became convulsed, though she seemed to grasp her object with undiminished firmness.

"Burton, she will pull down the pedestal and break the

lamp; the noise will disturb his Lordship, and you know his temper when any thing goes wrong. Leave her alone, and I will get a policeman."

These arguments of the lad had more effect than his appeal to humanity. The porter let go his grasp; the lad was sent for a police-officer; and the footmen stood in a group, discussing whether it would be better merely to have the woman turned out, or taken before a magistrate.

In a few minutes the boy returned with a police-officer. All eyes were immediately turned to the place of recent struggle, and every voice simultaneously cried out; "By —— she is off; she has escaped!"

Where can she have got to?—how could she get away?—it is impossible!—and a score of similar ejaculations, seemed to convey the idea that the servants really began to think they had been contending with a witch that had vanished into air.

"Got to!" said the policeman; "why down stairs, to be sure, and she has robbed the house, and escaped, probably, up the area-steps."

This idea was adopted by all; each accused the other of stupidity, in not having at first thought of a thing so palpable; and, at last, all turned with fury on the lad for having prevented the violent ejection of the woman in the first instance. The poor boy stood in speechless terror, overwhelmed with the idea of having been the cause of a robbery in his Lordship's house. At length the policeman assumed the direction of affairs, and having placed a servant at the front, and another at the back area, to prevent escape, he descended with a third, in order to search the offices and basement story of the mansion.

The supreme wisdom of all the parties was here entirely at fault. The fact was, that whilst the porter had stood with the outer-door ajar, waiting for the return of the foot-boy with an officer, and whilst the rest of the servants had got round him to settle the difficult point of simple ejection, or of ejection followed by custody in the station-house, and correction by a magistrate, the old woman had almost flown up the grand staircase, and had entered a magnificent ante-room, where she stood gasping

for breath, and her senses perfectly bewildered at the dreadful scene she had gone through.

It was with difficulty that she collected her scattered thoughts; but, at last, she grew sensible of the magnificence around her, and she began to reflect that the splendour seemed to realise, or surpass, all she had read in fairy tales about oriental grandeur and magic treasures. She paced fearfully through the scene, her mind too saddened by one sole object to be attracted by wealth, except through a vision of its power over the affections of nature. She found a door partly opened, and holding her breath, and stopping like a mortal upon the precinct of hallowed ground, she entered a bed-room so superb, as to make the preceding chamber appear almost poor. A painted ceiling, mirrors extending from that ceiling to the ground, buhl cabinets, and tables of enamel and gold, covered with china vases, bouquets, bijouterie, and jewellery of dazzling lustre, might have confused the brain of any person whose mind was sufficiently at ease to be moved by splendour. There was a large bed, with its golden canopy, and royal purple curtains lined with rose satin, and on it was a human figure, but so buried in pillows of down, and shaded by lace, that it was impossible to tell whether whether it was the person of a child or of an adult. At the side of the bed were two tables of enamel and gold and of buhl, the one covered with new novels, and with poems and books of prints, superbly bound, and the other hid by a profusion of trinkets, rouge-pots, scent-bottles, perfume-caskets, mirrors set in gold, and ornaments beyond an ordinary capacity to name. A golden caudle-cup, on a gold salver, stood in the middle, and its untouched contents showed that the patient had not been disturbed to cloy the surfeited appetite with refreshments. The once decent, but now rusty and somewhat tattered mourning of the old woman, with her humble widow's weeds, formed a singular contrast to the surrounding splendour, as she stood, with a palpitating heart, by the bed-side, gazing on it with a fearful restlessness, as if she dreaded to be seen by the object it supported, whilst, at other moments, she gazed upon the sleeping figure with an affection which seemed too intense to be endured.

At last the figure moved ; the lady awoke, and raised her beautiful face from the pillows, like a pearl from cotton.

"Oh God! Mary, my child!" cried the old woman, as she staggered towards the bed, and made an effort to throw herself upon it, endeavouring to clasp her daughter in her arms; but the bed was by far too high, and the lady put out one of the most delicate and pretty hands ever seen, and, shaking her lace ruffle, she beckoned to her mother not to approach too near.

"My dear mother," said she, "for goodness sake don't come so near; you don't know the mischief you might do. I have a fever on me, and your clothes are really wet. Why, you have not come through the rain, have you?"

The old woman buried her face in the bed-clothes, and sobbed piteously. At length, recovering herself, she said, with a hurried tenderness—

"Oh, Mary, tell your poor, old mother, is there *any* danger?"

"Not exactly danger; but if my Lord were to know that you had been here, it might occasion an unpleasantness between us."

"But, Mary, child, *are* you not in danger?"

"Danger, mother, how can I be in danger? am I not legally married, and have my rights? but when a man of Lord Anketell's rank and estate marries a workhouse apothecary's daughter like me, it is only grateful in me not to mortify him by my family, and in his own house, too, and before his servants. I trust, in goodness, you did not announce yourself as my mother!"

A large tear, or, rather, a continued tear, ran down the pale and withered cheek of the mother. With a tone altered almost to chilling apathy, she cried, "Mary, I read in the newspaper that you were dangerously ill. You had never written to me since your marriage, and I was content not to mortify you; but when I found your life in danger—I, who had nursed you through the cruel diseases of your infancy—I who had—oh God! oh God! it was too much to let my child go out of the world without kissing her poor face—once all my own. I have walked to London from ——— to hear one word of tenderness from my own child; and I find her life not gone; but nature is extinct, and you are the child of pride—not my child."

"Lord Anketell's wife, you meant to have said, mother. But I really *was* ill. I caught a cold at Almack's: but as his Lordship wanted an excuse for not attending the House whilst the — bill is in committee, he got the newspapers to publish that I was dangerously ill. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, mother, reach me that handkerchief, and the eau de Cologne. Your tears, I do declare, have taken all the curls out of my hair, and my wrist, too, is wet through and through. Lord, ma, only see the lace——"

"And you are not ill, Mary," said the old woman; "not really ill?" and she pressed the fair little hand to her haggard lips—hung over the face of her daughter, regardless of that which alone occupied that daughter's thoughts—the curls and the lace.

"But, ma, how shabby, how *very* shabby, and dirty, too, I declare—la, I would not have had my Lord's servants see you for the universe. You will never leave off those odious, unbecoming weeds, and father dead so long. Well, I'm glad to find you still living; and I hope you have been happy, and well—and——"

"Very happy, very well," said the old woman, wringing her hands, and sobbing bitterly.

"La, I thought I heard footsteps; didn't you?—do stop, you make such a noise—no, it is a mistake. Well, ma, I heard of your design about the tombstone in our churchyard, and the monument. I was so alarmed—but I knew you hadn't exactly the means to incur such an expense—and so I was comforted, and——"

"Mary, Mary; that monument is already erected to your poor father's memory, and it expresses——"

"Gracious goodness! not that he was the village apothecary, I hope?"

"Yes, that he was for fifty years the doctor of that petty workhouse—the shopkeeper of our petty village—and that he was beloved by the poor, and respected by the rich."

"Oh, how very unfortunate! for my Lord naturally wishes to avoid all tracing of my parentage, and 'Burke's Peerage' merely says that Lord Anketell married Mary, daughter of ——



—, Esq., of —, in the county of —, and that reads very well."

"Oh, Mary, your brain is turned, and it breaks my poor old heart! My last illness cost me all the remains of my little property; even your poor old father's silver watch was sold, and now I——"

"Well, ma, that must have been your own fault, for never was there a better mother; and had you written one word—but give me that pocket-book off the table—no, not the red with the gold clasp, but the purple with the ruby."

The old woman mechanically handed the pocket-book, and the fair lady raised herself on her downy pillows, and began to count its contents, and to descant on the operation, as she turned over leaf after leaf.

"No, that 126*l.* is for Mr. Taylor's bill, my shoemaker; he has not been paid any thing for four years, and must be paid; and this—let me see—what did I put these notes in this leaf for? oh, I remember, 93*l.* for the plumassier; and this 55*l.* is for the perfumer's account; and 37*l.* for the brushes and trifles of that description; but oh, this odious 'Madame de Tressor,' my milliner and dressmaker—619*l.* in one year, and less than a half—well, my Lord's check is not enough, he must settle this bill himself, for I'll have nothing to do with it. But here, my dear ma, I have no occasion to settle Mr. Payne's bill for the brushes and knick-knacks, and so, suppose you take this 37*l.*" And the young and beautiful countess stretched out her hand, holding the folded notes slightly pressed between her thumb and finger towards the old woman, who stood aghast with astonishment.

"Ha! ha! ha! Well, ma, you make me laugh; you may well be astonished when you see such sums, and recollect how the shillings used to be saved, and the broken bottles sold from father's shop, to buy me my winter's cloak and clogs—but take the money."

The old woman shook her head, and thrust the proffered notes from her.

"Why, ma, I shouldn't offer them to you if they weren't mine. To be sure, when a rich man, or a man of title, marries

a poor girl, he doesn't marry the whole family; and, indeed, it is not exactly honest for a woman to give away her husband's property to poor relations; but his Lordship gave me this money for myself, and has no right to know what I have done with it; and if I appear in good style as his wife, and don't get into debt beyond his allowance, what right has he to complain? besides, if a rich old man marries a very fine young woman, I don't see that the obligation is all on one side; and, besides, you are my mother."

The mother groaned bitterly.

"It is not like helping cousins, nephews, nieces, and a swarm of toad-eating, insincere, heartless kindred; so, ma—but, good gracious! the room is haunted, or I did hear footsteps, and a sigh, too. Pray, ring the bell—no, not for the world, the servants would see you; but, ma, look all round the room for me. You know how nervous I was when a child. Well, you won't stir? Good heavens, take the money and say good bye, and let me ring the bell, for I begin to be very much frightened. Here, dear mother, take the money, for your clothes are very thin for this bitter weather, and you must want it—indeed you must."

During all time the poor old woman had stood upright and rigid, like a figure of extreme old age suddenly petrified. Her large gray-eyes were dilated, and, though they glanced upon her daughter, they bespoke perfect vacancy, or, at least, an unconsciousness of the volubility with which she had been assailed. As the daughter again pressed her to take the money, she took the notes in her hand, and crumpled them without the slightest alteration of attitude or change of countenance. Lady Anketell became alarmed, and thought her mother was what she called "death-struck."—"For God's sake, take the money and go!" she exclaimed with earnestness. The old woman's lips were a little convulsed; she recovered her senses, and suddenly catching a glance at the ball of crumpled notes that she had been pressing in her palm with the grasp of convulsion, she dropped them on the floor; shaking her head, and clasping her hands, she left the room without uttering a word. She appeared like a corpse moving by mechanical contrivance. Lady Anketell followed her with her eyes till she had got out of the door, and

then, taking an oval hand-mirror from her toilette, she began to adjust her curls, lest her waiting-woman might see them in their disordered state.

As the mother descended the grand staircase, she was met by Lady Anketell's waiting-woman, followed by a footman with a tray of cold fowl and tongue, and decanters of wine. "I am ordered, madam," said the maid, curtsying with the most profound respect, "to give my Lord's most respectful compliments to you, and to say that his Lordship entreats that you will not leave the house without taking refreshments. His Lordship begs you will remain as long as is convenient, and, above all things, he hopes that you will order the carriage when you feel disposed to return home." The old woman was startled at these sounds of respect and kindness; they touched her heart. Unable to speak, she shook her head in token of dissent. She had been recalled to sensation and consciousness; her efforts to conceal her emotion were fruitless; her lips were strongly convulsed, and, putting her hands to her face, to hide her feelings, she burst into tears, and hurried out of the house through the line of servants, who bowed to her most respectfully as she passed through the hall. The humility of the servants was a contrast to their previous brutal violence, which could not be surpassed, except by the contrast between the manners of the daughter as the Countess of —, and as plain Mary —, the apothecary's daughter of —, the belle of the village, for whom so many rival shop-lads had once received and given many broken heads and bloody noses.

In fact, the sound of footsteps and the sigh, which Lady Anketell had heard, or fancied she had heard in the bed-room, were not the sounds of a super, nor, altogether, of an unnatural being. His Lordship, in passing the ante-chamber, had been attracted by the deep sobs of his mother-in-law. He had entered the bed-room, and, concealed by the curtain, he had witnessed the whole scene between the daughter and the mother. His feelings were moved to the extent of offering the poor old creature refreshment and the ride home;—they were moved to this extent, and no further.

Two pounds, thirteen shillings, and fourpence-halfpenny was

the sum precisely which the poor old widow had in her pocket, as she tottered down the steps from the portico of her daughter's mansion at Whitehall. She hurried to the — inn, at Whitechapel, and, that night, took her outside place in the mail to —. It was a wet and bitterly cold night, preceding, by eight-and-forty hours,—that night on which all hearts are made glad, all stomachs are filled to repletion, and almost all heads are filled to the verge of extravagance and wantonness ;—it was the night of the 23d of December, when the decrepit old widow seated herself outside the — mail, immediately behind the coachman. The wind drove the sharp sleet so fiercely, that no ingenuity of the loom could withstand its searchings, and, but for the cold at the heart, the old widow might have been sensible that her daughter was not wrong in describing her dress as old, threadbare, thin, and shabby—shabby—in such a night. The little curved hunchback was drenched to the skin, and looked like a whisk of frozen straw—a bunch of white bristles. The coachman, moved to pity, procured her an ostler's coat where he changed horses, and without the hope of the perquisite. Arrived at the village of —, the widow was lifted into her cottage. The bright warming-pan was put in requisition, and less than twelve hours had witnessed the transition of the old creature, from the sobbing on the quilt of Lady Anketell, in her splendid room, to gasping under the brown and red rug in her stone-paved chamber. In four hours she was a corpse !—and Lady Anketell was relieved from mortification to her fashionable life, and lived happily with her husband !

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## FORTUNE'S FROLICS.

THE STAGE.—THE ARMY.—THE LAW.

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"It's a bad night, sir," said my host of the —, at —, to me, as I mounted my horse, intent on reaching London. "You'll hardly make town to-night, through such weather; you'd better let me put the beast up, and take a bed here, sir."

"No, no, I thank you," I said; "the night's bad enough, but I'll try the road again."

"You'll find it a bad one, sir; and ten to one but the waters are out, and the way flooded, or the Dart would have been here before this; let me persuade you, sir."

"Your liquor, good friend," I answered, "would be a better persuasion than your words, if any thing could prevail, but I must on;" and, that said, I wished him a good night, and giving the reins a jerk, pushed homewards at a smart trot. It was, truly, a dismal night, and as an Irish friend of mine said of a similar one, "every hour it improved momentarily for the worse," till the rain blew in my face in clouds; the road was swamped, the wind roared, whistled, and howled, the thunder growled, and the lightning played about my stirrup-irons, or flashed on me the brightness of day, and then left me in almost chaotic darkness. I had not proceeded two miles, when I began very grievously to repent me of my obdurate refusal of my host's hospitality; but false shame, that sister of sin and folly, prevented me from turning my horse's head, and seeking the shelter I had left: meanwhile, every step I advanced, the storm came on more and more fiercely, till it amounted to a hurricane, and the horse could scarcely proceed for the violence of the

wind, which almost shook me from the saddle, and the water, which already reached over his fetlocks, so that it was with no little pleasure that, after beating five miles through the tempest, my eye caught a glimmer of light, which played through the crevices in the shutters of a post-house, on — moor. Thoroughly drenched, even to the innermost cuticle of my skin, I gladly drew up at the door, and committing my quadruped companion (no less anxious than myself to shelter his head) to the care of the landlord, I made a dart into the house, and quickly esconced myself in the farthest corner of the kitchen-settle: a small knapsack, unbuckled from my saddle, furnished me with dry stockings, linen, and trowsers, to which the landlord, in his charity, adding a smock-frock, I was soon as comfortable as a bishop, and at much less expense. A cigar, and a mug of punch, brewed by my own hands, together with the assurance of a bed, a luxury which, under worse circumstances, I have often been compelled to dispense with, completed the measure of my felicity, and I blessed my stars for having secured me such a haven. "A very bad night, sir," said somebody, as I set down my tumbler, after a most plebeian libation. Now, the donning of the frock and the compounding of the punch, had so engrossed me, that I had not perceived the other chimney-corner was occupied by a jolly, genteel, demi-rotund, red-faced, dapper little man; and as I assented to the remark, I apologised to him for not having noticed him before. "Don't mention it, sir," he said; "but you've had a taste of the weather though," etc., etc., etc. And so we common-placed, in very neighbourly fashion, till a rumble was heard at the door, and, presently, a stranger presented himself, to share the comforts of a roof and a blazing coal and log fire. He was tall, of an erect figure, and wore a large blue cloak, from which, and from his somewhat stiff carriage, I gathered that he was an army man.

"A most infernal night, this, gentlemen," said he, approaching the fire. "Here, landlord, I can sleep here, I suppose?"

"We have one spare bed, sir."

"That will do." He soon after proceeded to his room to change his clothes. Immediately afterwards another coach stopt at the door, and while it was rattling past the window, off

again, a tall spare man, with an affected gait, savouring of pomp and ease, strode up to the fire, with an old portmanteau in his hand, and bowing lightly to me and my fellow-inmate of the chimney as he approached, spread his legs before the fire, took off his hat, shook the exterior wet, which could find no further room in or under his worn surtout, from of it, by a jerk of his shoulders, and spread his benumbed fingers, first relieved from the embraces of a pair of white-worn black kid gloves, over the blaze. "A bad night, gentlemen; but you seem, fortunately, tolerably dry—travelled inside, I presume—safest way—I generally do myself—variable climate ours—you had better draw nearer the fire."

"Don't trouble yourself, sir," said the soldier, who had just re-entered, "you are more in need of its warmth than we are; I have just changed."

"O, indeed, fortunate for you that you travelled with a change—the safest way—I generally do myself; but the fact is, I am a humble and unworthy member of the histrionic profession—a manager—and not contemplating this sudden resolve of the weather, I had sent my wardrobe on with my company to —."

"But, sir," said the officer, "in the state that you are, you will be dead with the rheumatism or lumbago before the morning. If you have not a change, you had better go to-bed."

"*Commencez par le commencement, mon ami,*" says Pantagruel, or, as Mrs. Glasse has it, in her recipe how to prepare a goose, "first get a goose,"—there's not a bed to spare in the house; to be sure, I have in my portmanteau a couple of dry suits, but they would hardly suit here." We all begged him, with one voice, to waive ceremony, and consult his health. "Why, the fact is, gentlemen," said the player, "they are theatrical."

"Never mind that," we answered.

"Well, then, gentlemen, since you are so kind as to permit my travestie, I will avail myself of your goodness. The player then left the room, and, in a few minutes, re-entered, metamorphosed into Shylock, without a beard, and wearing a white night-cap. When the laugh occasioned by his ludicrous ap-



pearance had subsided, the conversation turned upon the profession of the Stage, and the prejudices which existed against it. "Alas! gentlemen," said the player, "it is a sorry trade, and a laborious one: in youth, we find excitement in it, and laugh, perforce, at its *désagréments*; but, at my time of life, sir, the treadmill is a recreation compared with it. Would to God I had never ceased to be a cowherd, or had, at least, never quitted the waist of the Hell-hound! You seem surprised at these words," he added, "but I was not always what I am, and it is rather strange how I became so, as it is generally surprising to see on what almost imperceptible pivots our destinies turn. Perhaps it might not be unamusing to you to have my history; and as we are met here in kindly fellowship, and the fire burns cheerily, I will relate it to you, if you will lend me your ears."

We gladly assented to this, and thanked him heartily for the offer. The soldier drew out his cigar-case, and, handing it to me, bade me help myself, inquiring whether I would share a bowl of punch with him? I readily agreed, and the bowl being ordered, the player was invited to join us at it; the officer's friend called for some wine and water; the gentleman in the chimney-corner bespoke a glass of hot brandy and water; and the fire being stirred, the candles snuffed, pipes and cigars lit, throats cleared, legs crossed, and limbs finally fidgeted into comfortable attitudes, our historian began.

#### THE ADVENTURES OF A PLAYER.

"It is now sixty-three years since I advanced, by the usual nine months' march, into the bowels of this land. My father was one Job Dickson, and my mother, Nell, his wife. Old Job had, in his early days, been a soldier, and, subsequently, a trumper; but, at the period of my history, had subsided into something between a poacher and a pauper, while my lady-mother had become eminent in the occult and other sciences, and dispensed pills and prophecies to the neighbouring nieves and serves. At seventeen, I was a strapping lad, but had given no distinct promise of what my career would be; my time, for the first ten years, after the attainment of my first lustre, having been spent in the inglorious toils of cow-minding, bird-scaring,

and other agricultural pursuits, and my last two years having been passed in that sort of independent dependence which the game laws and the poor laws conjointly produce and perpetuate; in fact, I, Job, junior, had learnt the art and mystery of snaring the hare, and acquired a taste for gin, and for the sweets of idleness, and might, in time, have attained to the honour of shooting a keeper, but for one of those accidents, which are continually turning the course of human life into unforeseen channels. It so happened that, in one of my moonlight forays, I had made the acquaintance of a certain young lady well known in our district. 'But why dwell on this?' as the poet says. Some time afterwards I was particularly wanted by a parish-officer, who was inquiring for me, with a sort of parental solicitude, saying he wanted me for *a little job*; so, packing up all my personal property very carefully in my coat-pockets, I set out, one starry night, from my father's halls, without a word to any body, and fled for safety and for succour to the great refuge for the destitute—London. Towards nightfall, on the fourth day after my flight, I reached Whitechapel Church, completely knocked up. I did not, however, remain long in that condition, for, at the next corner, I was knocked down, and before I had time to get on my legs, I was bid to stand, and my pockets were emptied of two bad shillings, a lump of cold bacon, half a cotton handkerchief, a tin tobacco-box (containing a lock of Polly's hair), half an ounce of shag, and the ballad of 'Black-eyed Susan.'

"This was rather a bad beginning, but I bore my loss with all the fortitude of my nature, simply cursing love, the justice, the overseer, and the other thieves; then drawing a smooth sixpence from the inside of my left shoe, I turned into a public-house, where the noise promised me some amusement, and, taking a seat in the tap-room, ordered half-a-pint of beer. I had not sat here long when I perceived that the rest of the company seemed all mighty familiar with each other, and, soon after, I observed they all wore the same dress, while, from their conversation, I learnt they were seamen. Now I had always an itching for adventure, and seeing no prospect of indulging it longer in orchards, preserves, or fish-ponds, I began to think of

'courting danger on the deep.' This thought had just struck me, when the company, with one accord, rose to depart. 'Come along, young man,' said one, who went before the rest. 'Where be'st a-goin',' said I, innocently, taking it for an invitation to a jollification of some sort, but I was soon enlightened; my pressing friends were the press-gang, and, that day week, I was entered on board the Hell-hound, at Portsmouth, about to sail with an outward-bound East India convey.

"Here I had the honour of serving his Majesty in the capacity of a waister, during five months that our voyage lasted, but my talents were found not to be longer wanted. The captain, who had noticed me as an active chap, having lost his servant by the yellow fever, selected me to supply his place; and as I was fortunate enough to please him, and he said that I might be infinitely more useful to him with a little scholarship, he paid the schoolmaster to instruct me in reading, writing, and arithmetic. This worthy was an old rum-drinking, swearing, tobacco-loving sinner, who reckoned both the law and the gospel secondary matters to grog and returns. 'Go to hell, you stupid son of a w——,' at the same time squirting an ocean of decoction of pig-tail on my slate, was the paternal admonition that told me of an error in a sum. But he had gentle, winning moments, when he would strive, with the grace of a coach-horse in an opera-box, to be insinuating. Such were the times when I was besought to purify a neckcloth with my master's soap, for some special occasion, or, on some of my frequent shore-trips, to provide him with some choice bit for his eternal mastications. The captain, my master, was a young sprig of nobility, a martinet in matters of coats and trowsers among his officers, and rather a good sort of devil-may-care fellow among his men; but, amongst the women, he was a devil and an angel, synonymous terms in intrigue; and, I confess, his doings in that line often exercised my ingenuity.

"'Job,' he said to me one day, about three years after I had entered his service—which I may truly say I preferred to the king's—and while we were lying at Portsmouth, 'take these two letters on shore, and tell Mrs. D. (his wife) that I can't leave the

ship to-day; and mention to Miss Vickery that I'll dine with her this afternoon.'

" 'Yes, sir,' said I, and I went on shore; but meeting there, unfortunately, with a shipmate, I saw the bottom of a quartern measure so often, that, at length, I forgot the head of my orders, and gave a tender letter intended for the unmarried lady, and brim-full of sweet recollections of past stolen joys, anticipations of others to come, and a word about the dinner, to Mrs. D.; and delivered to Miss Vickery a conjugal epistle, in which my master vowed never to set eyes again on the little impudent baggage, as he called herself, who, by her arts and wheedling ways, had led him to give his dear wife offence; and concluding, as the lady's maid told me, with a request that she would contrive to send him twenty pounds on board, to pay his servant, myself, who had taken care that he should owe me nothing. I did not see the captain again that day, as, when I went on board again, he was gone ashore: but, the next morning, when I went to get his clothes ready, I found him already dressed; and when I entered he rose, and shut the door, and sitting down with ominous composure, asked me if I had ever been started? By the Lord Harry, Job, thought I, you've done some mischief in your cups; the gratings, methought, were marching up to me on a couple of cat's forelegs, and I was so confused by the question, that I stammered out, 'No, I thank you, sir.'—'None of your nonsense, d—n you, sir; if you never have tasted the cat, the service has not been fairly dealt with, and I'll see that reparation is speedily made. You were on shore yesterday?'—'Yes, sir, by your orders.'—'And were you drunk by my orders? And you have never been started? Well, then, by G—!' but here his words were arrested by the appearance of his wife, and, along with her, her brother and father, all wearing faces as long as handspikes. I rejoiced at the interruption, left the state-room, and seizing a large portmanteau of my master's, packed it full of my movables in all haste, went upon deck with it, and a letter in my hand, and telling the officer of the deck that I had the captain's orders to take them on shore, got into a bum-boat alongside, was landed, mounted the top of a London coach, got off half way, took a cross road, purchased a great-coat, travelled

two days in a waggon, then got on another coach, and stopped, in the end, at Birmingham. Here I lay snug and quiet for a couple of days, when, having new rigged myself, I took a turn, and was looking in at a jeweller's window, when the sound of my name, familiarly bawled in my ears, made me almost bolt through the glass. I dared not look round, but stood pilloried in the position I was accosted in, with my eyes staring out of my head, but seeing nothing, unless it was a sort of vision of boat-swain's-mates tucking their shirt-sleeves up. 'Holloa, Job, why, damme, mun, art deaf?' cried the voice again; 'or hast forgotten Jack Driver?'—'Jack Driver!' I exclaimed; 'the Lord be praised; give us your hand, Jack. I am so glad, I could take a lion by the fin.'—'Ah, you're a good chap, I thought you'd be glad to see me; but what be'st a-doing here—and where ha' ye been since you cut ——?' Now that was a question that I thought better unanswered; so, instead of satisfying Jack's curiosity, I inquired what brought him there? and was told, his legs and a recruiting sergeant. 'Lord love you,' said Jack, 'I belongs to the Buffs. But come,' said Jack, 'let us have a drop o' summit, and I'll tell ye a sight o' news;' so we turned into a public-house which was at hand, and there we had so many sups, that, in the morning, I woke with a cursed pain in my head, and a shilling in my waistcoat-pocket, which I was told had also converted me into one of the Buffs. I guessed rightly, that this was my friend Mr. John Driver's doings; but, however, I cared little about it, for I knew not what to do with myself before, and I was, at least, sure again now of board and lodging; so I buckled to, and having fought the bully of the regiment, and learnt my drill, I became pretty comfortable; and as I was, thanks to the old fellow, my Mentor in the Hell-hound, a pretty fair scholar, I got on, till, in the course of five years, I came to be orderly clerk, and a sort of gentleman.

"It was then, after sundry minor amours, that I attracted the eyes of a single lady, who lived opposite the barrack-gate at ——, in a small house of her own. Now or never, I thought, Job, my boy; if you lose this opportunity, you deserve to be shut in durance the rest of your life. So I smiled, and nodded, and winked, till I saw the inside of the tenement, and, once

there, I vowed it should be mine; so I ogled, and whispered, and swore, and won the day—procured my discharge, and enlisted next day with Hymen. Well, I was in clover. Now my spouse was a widow, her first husband having been lost some years before on the coast of India; and she had a neat little property of about a hundred and twenty pounds a-year, and was as tight a little body, and as good a housewife, as any would desire—and very comfortable we were. Shortly after our marriage we removed from the town, and took a small farm, which just grew enough for our own consumption, and amused me. Then I had my gun and my dog, and a bit of a pony and chaise too, in which I and the little woman went to church, or to a merry-making; and, for six years, we knew no more of care than of the fifth wheel of a coach; but

‘All that’s bright must fade.’

“I had been alone to-market one day, and, returning, had taken the saddle off the pony, and having slipped his bridle, had turned him into the grass, so that I got up to the house before it was known I was coming, when, on looking in at the kitchen-window, I saw my wife, with her eyes shut, lying in the arms of a strange man; with one drive I knocked the door open, and, rushing in on them, demanded what the scene meant, and who the gentleman was? I can’t describe to you what ensued—he was my wife’s first husband, returned after a ten years’ captivity among the Malays. Of course, I had only to cede my right, which, after having taken a painful farewell of my late loved partner, I did; but the shock of contending feelings unhinged her, and the dear little soul, in two months, sank into the grave. Heaven rest her! Her husband went to sea again, and I, at a loss what to do, spent day after day in planning, and re-planning, and regretting the happiness I had lost. One evening, that I was more than usually dull, I went to the theatre, with a view of dispelling the despondent ideas that crowded on me, and took my seat in the front row of the pit. A tumult, originating I know not how, took place, which interrupted the performance—the police was called in—the row became a riot—from a revolt ensued a revolution; the benches

were torn up, and a party of ruffians, intent on theft, or any other villany, took the opportunity to gratify their natures, and, rushing on the stage, spread themselves through the dressing-rooms. Knowing the characters of some of these gentlemen, I seized a bar of iron that lay near, and jumping across the orchestra, followed the cries of women, which came from a distance, and, in a few seconds, found myself among three of the scoundrels, who had forced into a room where two females were, and, after plundering it, and tearing the ear-rings even from their ears, were proceeding to the basest and grossest insults, when I sent my bar flying among them, and taking one of the ladies, who had fainted, in my arms, and seizing the hand of the other, I delivered them from the place by a small back door, and conveyed them to a neighbouring house, where they were in safety. The rest is briefly told. I was thanked, and warmly: the lady who had fainted was young, and a beauty. I perceived it. She was the manager's daughter. I became a player to woo her—and, in six months, she was married to a peer. What I have seen, and what I have encountered since, would be matter for as many volumes as Lopez de Vega wrote, and I reserve my memoirs for the highest bidder, following the example of all other great men."

Having concluded, with one accord we thanked the actor for his history, drank a deep health to him, and speedily called on the soldier for his confessions, who proceeded briefly to tell of his progress in

#### THE ARMY.

"Gentlemen," he said, "mine is but a short and uninteresting tale. I entered the army a boy, twenty-six years ago, and served through the whole of the late war in one regiment and another, on the Continent and in the Peninsula, and was fortunate enough to have my name mentioned more than once with commendation in dispatches; but there was a ban upon my name. My father, although he had a large family, was imprudent enough to be honest, and so foolish as to be independent. He was an author of considerable celebrity, and, notwithstanding considerable offers to induce him to adopt a contrary course,

invariably maintained in his writings the liberal side of all political questions. This was a very sufficient reason why my name should be passed over on all occasions of promotion, and, at the peace, I was a lieutenant, as I had been for fourteen years, and, as I saw, every prospect of remaining the rest of my life. On my return to England, I took a small cottage near Walton-upon-Thames, where, with my pay and a small income of my wife's, I contrived to live genicelly, although superfluities were necessarily forbidden. We had been there some time, when one evening, as I was walking out with my wife, we were overtaken on our way by a lady driving a curricle, who stopped to admire two pet spaniels we had taken with us for an airing. On our return we learned that she was the wife of an illustrious character, whose voice was supreme in army matters; and, in the morning, I sent her the two dogs, with my respectful requests that she would honour me by accepting them, which she was graciously pleased to do, and, in the evening, called at my cottage, on her drive, to thank me for the present; and having inquired of me if I was not in the army, and what was my rank and standing? departed. Three weeks after this event I was appointed (thanks to my dog and bitch) to a company, which my services had vainly claimed; and subsequently, for a Persian cat, obtained the majority I now hold; and God knows whether I should not, at this moment, have been a field-marshal if the old lady had lived, and I had got a judicious dog-fancier for a friend."

The major finished; and his health being drunk, he appealed to the chimney-corner tenant to continue our amusement, and who readily proceeded to do so by giving us the following account of the

#### LIFE OF A GENTLEMAN OF THE LAW.

"I should be happy, gentlemen," said the speaker, "to follow the example of our worthy friend, the doctor here, and begin with the beginning, that is to say, commence my history with my pedigree; but it has been decided, in *Green v. Smith*, see 1st Atkins, p. 572, that, in the case of bills for specific performance, the court will not give the relief sought where the act



is impossible to be done—a very sensible decision, and one of which I avail myself in this case; for, to say truth, gentlemen, I know as little of my lineage as old Billy Lackaday, who was found, one fine frosty morning, suspended in an airy basket to the sign-post of the Hog in Armour. The only common ancestor I can date from with certainty is Adam; and all that I know with accuracy of my descent, is that, arguing on the received hypothesis of generation, I must have had both a father and a mother, but who they were surpasseth my understanding. I was first discovered, about forty years ago, at the door of the poor-house, in the village of —, neatly wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and packed up in a deal box, covered with an ironing-blanket. Some gave me to the parson and pew-opener—some to the parish-clerk, Gabriel Gammon, a puritanical person, and Doll Saners, a lady who, Sappho-like, sung ditties to the wind. The latter conjecture I renounce, and on the former I can give no opinion, and am, on the whole, contented, like Napoleon, to date from myself. My early days, of course, were spent in the workhouse, and at the parish-school I was first initiated into the mysteries of the alphabet and of pot-hooks and hangers, under the auspices of one Gabriel Gammon, who wrote himself, in addition to his clerkship, parish-school-master. Luckily, I was impervious to the gross tuition of this man; the ignorant attributed this unjustly to stupidity—the more sagacious, to idleness and obstinacy; and it was at length suggested, in the cant of the place, that I should be well walloped. This was a species of correction I frequently underwent; it is analogous to the system of flogging in other great public scholastic establishments, although of a less degrading character; and if it wrought no other effect upon me, it at least, by calling into early exercise my lungs, mainly tended to give me the sonorous delivery I am gifted with. To a boy, however, of my great natural parts, and whose feelings were bottomed as mine are, this punishment could not but be loathsome; accordingly, I meditated vengeance and escape, and, having found a fitting opportunity, I burnt Gabriel's two wigs and one pair of inexpressibles one morning before he rose, filled his shoes with coal-tar, extracted from the kettle of an artist employed to daub

the palings, and, happy in my revenge, left the house by day-break, with a Dutch cheese in the top of Gabriel's hat, borrowed for the occasion, a dozen red-herrings, and a beating heart in breast, and a bottle of small beer and a Society's bible in my coat-pockets; and, after eight hours' hard walking and running, found myself in a pleasant wood, at a safe remove from my native village. Fatigued with my pedestrianism, and the task of balancing the hat and cheese, I reclined here *sub tegmini fagi*, and made a hearty meal of red-herrings, washing them down with the beer; then, availing myself of their invigorating qualities, I resumed my journey, and, at night, slept on the windward side of a brick-kiln, and, in a week's time, reached London by short stages, having contrived to eke out my provisions, during this time, by occasionally pulling a turnip, or sucking a stray egg. Night was fast approaching on the day of my arrival in town, and I was pennyless, and without a shelter for my head. I wandered from street to street, wondering where I should get my next meal, until I found my way into a court near the Temple, which was inhabited by attorneys, and finding no other outlet, I was about returning by the way I had entered, when a gentleman, who came out of one of the houses in great haste, asked me if I wanted a job, and receiving my answer in the affirmative, gave me a large blue bag to carry, and told me to follow him, which I did, until he stopped at a large building, took the bag from me, and told me to wait for him; and, returning in half an hour, handed it again to me, and walked on to the house from which we had set out, when he gave me a shilling for my pains; with this I procured some scraps from a cook's shop, and some bread, and, having satisfied the cravings of my stomach, I took up my quarters for the night in an unfinished house, where I slept very comfortably among the shavings. In the morning, not knowing where to go, I again repaired to the court where I had been employed the day before, and I had not long been there before the same gentleman again made his appearance, and I made bold to touch Gabriel's hat to him, and ask him if he had another job? 'Why no, not exactly, unless, as the chambers are going to be painted, you like to go and help the clerk to put the desks and boxes out of the way.' Any thing

for a meal. So I thanked him, and hurried away to my work. The clerk, who was, although only a scrub, rather a fop, was rejoiced at the accession of an ally, who relieved him of all the dirty work, and accordingly treated me, at dinner-time, to some bread and cheese and beer, to which I did ample justice, and at night, after having some coffee and bread and butter, I received eighteen-pence for my work. This rather elevated me in my own estimation, and created doubts in my mind whether it was quite genteel or consistent with my dignity to sleep on shavings, and in a house without a roof; so I ventured, as I gallantly carried the landlady's pail down stairs, to ask her if she could recommend me to a lodging? This led to a confabulation, in the course of which I entrusted her with my history, and which ended by the kind old woman—God bless her!—she's my own housekeeper now—lendering me a corner of her garret, which I joyfully accepted. Day after day I got some little occupation about this gentleman's office, until, at length, I was permanently placed in it as errand-boy, and to serve notices, etc., etc., at six shillings a-week, which I regularly handed over to my good landlady, who contrived to board and lodge me for it, and to procure me, now and then, such articles of clothing as I required, which, however, were few, as I had, occasionally, a coat or a pair of trousers from my master. As I made myself, moreover, useful and accommodating to his *chargé d'affaires*, he instructed me in writing and spelling, until I could write a fair hand, and was tolerably perfect in orthography.

“ In the evenings, after office hours, I read one book and another of my master's, increasing my little stock of knowledge; and in the process of time, my senior quitting the office, I was installed in his place, and became a clerk in earnest. This was a proud day for me and Mrs. Jenkins, who dealt out to me, after a gayer supper than usual, many useful lessons of thrift, greatly to my profit in the end; a garret adjoining her's was taken for me, and we went on very comfortably until I attained my twenty-fourth year, when my employer, in return for my attention, gave me my articles, as it is called—that is, took me as his articulated clerk, or apprentice, without a premium, advancing at the same time the money for the stamps on my indentures, (1227.) and

taking my bond for the amount, under the understanding that he was to deduct a certain proportion weekly from my salary, which was continued until he was reimbursed that sum. To understand the full value of this kindness, you must know, gentlemen, that no person can be admitted an attorney or solicitor until he has served under articles five years to some person, duly admitted and practising, as my employer was, and, that by this act I was put in the way to become a member of the profession.

"I was now a gentleman—and polished up my outward man as became one; occasionally, too, when my finances would permit, I figured in the pit of Covent-Garden or Drury-Lane at half-price; but, above all, I kept my eye on the main chance, and on my master's interests: nothing like it, gentlemen. At length, my articles expired, and I was admitted; and shortly afterwards, the worthy man who had so greatly befriended me, took ill and died, leaving me all his office furniture, his law-books, his watch—a very splendid one—and his business. My name now stood conspicuous on the door-posts, and on the door, and in the law-lists, and in the papers, and I was considered well to do in the world. But while I wore a sleek and smiling exterior, I was as miserable as a scold-maïrn within. The small sum of money I had been enabled to save, vanished within the first three months under the magic influence of the wand of office of my Lord Ellenborough, the Duke of Grafton, the Duke of St. Albans, and other of the magnates, who sit like so many incubi and night-mares on the heart of old mother Justice; and notwithstanding all my care and parsimony—my dining at Johnsen's off a pewter plate for six-pence, and breakfasting and supping neither here nor there—I had the mortification to find myself on a beautiful sun-shiny day without a shilling out of my books. It would have been some consolation to me if the day had been dull and overcast; but instead of that, the sun shone with most provoking brilliancy, and I, merely seeking to escape from my thoughts, feigned a journey for business to the West End, and wandered into St. James's Park, meditating most despondingly on the gloomy prospect before me. It was nothing for me to return to the capacity of a clerk, I could have been well contented simply to do that; but the idea that I must throw away a good and pro-

fitable business, made to my hands, played the devil with me, and drove me almost mad, and I threw myself down on a seat, and began to think seriously of borrowing seven and six-pence somewhere, to pay the price of an advertisement for a situation. I had sat here some half hour or better, ruminating on the 'chaos come again' of my affairs, when an elderly stranger seated himself on the same bench, and bowed to me. I returned the courtesy, and some small talk on the weather ensued, which was interrupted by the striking of the clock of the Horse Guards. 'Bless me,' said the stranger, 'is it possible that can be five, and I have to dine at my Lord B.'s, at seven? and, dear me! I am such a perfect stranger in London, that I have no idea in the world how my lodgings lie from this; and I would rather wander to Tartary than enter one of those filthy machines the hackney-coaches; and perceiving, sir, you are a resident at the court end of the town, will you, if you are going in that direction, take me under your guidance as far as Park-street?"

"My thoughts were not of the most agreeable, so I acceded to the gentleman's request, in order to wile away some portion of time. On the way, my new acquaintance's conversation became very animated: he talked warmly of the innocent joys of a rural life, the depravity of great towns, and the enormous profligacy of London; and when we arrived at his door, he professed such an admiration of my excellent principles, that he insisted, in such a frank and hearty manner, on my going in and taking a steak with him, that I had not the heart, or rather, to say truth, I had not a stomach to resist. 'My Lord B.,' said the old gentleman, 'is a very old friend of mine—we were chums at Christ Church, forty years ago. I can take liberties with him.' And then he told me of an extensive fall of timber he had lately made on his estate in Rutlandshire, which had brought him up to town—mentioned his having swopped a pack of fox-hounds with young Squire Jones, of some place with an unspeakable name, in Radnorshire, for a fishing cottage on the Wye; and asked me if I knew how Dickenson was off for hunters just now. A cough, however, which I manufactured at this crisis, and managed to keep in play till the girl, whom I heard on the stairs, entered, saved me the cost of an answer, and I believed preserved my

credit. Our dinner ended, my host pressed the wine upon me, and started successively fresh topics of conversation, until I got entangled in a long debate on the corn question, which cost him three bottles of Bom Reteiro. When we had ended it, I began to perceive, what I had not observed while engaged in argument, that I was rather swimming. 'Come, my lad,' said the old gentleman to me, as I was rubbing my hand over my forehead; 'we'll just take a drop of brandy to steady us, and then you shall see me to his lordship's;' and with that he poured me out a huge claret-glass full. 'No, really,' I said, 'you must excuse me.' 'Not a whit, my lad—not a whit; it will keep the wine down—off with it—no flash in the pan.' And I was compelled to swallow it. I had not been five minutes in the air, on our way to Lord B.'s, before I felt that I was as drunk as Chloe. I however regulated my motions, and steadied myself as well as I could to counterfeit soberness, until we arrived at a large door, with a brilliant gas light in the glass-work of the door, but where it was situated I have no idea. This my companion said was Lord B.'s, and I was about to part with him, when he told me that after the pleasant evening we had spent, he could not allow me to leave him yet, and that he would introduce me to his lordship, who would be most happy to see any friend of his; and accordingly I suffered myself to be lugged in, was introduced to the noble lord, and was speedily seated at an elegant table, on which the remains of a dessert, together with decanters of wine in abundance, yet lingered. I felt that it became me to be on my best behaviour at the board of a peer, so I drank but sparingly, that I might add as little as possible to the weight already on my manners.

"In about a quarter of an hour the company adjourned to the drawing-rooms, where cards were proposed, and tables were speedily laid: I declined playing at first, and occupied myself in feigning to watch the games. In one corner of the back-room I perceived a large table at which my new friend sate in a kind of presidentship, with something that I thought very much like a rake in his hand, with which every now and then he seemed to draw heaps of cash and notes towards him. During an interval of play, his lordship (a very aristocratic looking character) and this

gentleman came up to me, and the former challenged me to take a hand of whist with him towards promoting better acquaintance; this I could not well decline, but I seized an opportunity to mention to the latter that I had unfortunately come out without money. 'Pray what o'clock is it?' he said, and I drew out the legacy of my late master to answer him from. 'That's a very handsome thing,' he remarked, 'permit me to look at it.' I did so; and he opened it and inspected its works and cases with the eye of a connoisseur. It certainly was a very beautiful watch, and had been a gift to my employer by a client who was under great and weighty obligations to him—it was a gold chronometer of massive material and richly studded with diamonds, and could not be worth less than a hundred and thirty guineas. 'A very handsome thing indeed,' said the gentleman as he returned it to me; 'but I beg pardon, you say you have no money; how very unfortunate! for I am in the same predicament with you; we left my place in such a hurry: but,' he added, 'the game is about to begin, it only waits for you. I should not like you to mention to his lordship that you were without cash; I know his lordship's steward, a rich old hunk, has had some pretty pickings in my lord's service, I assure you; and I have no doubt that to oblige me he will let you have what you require; and you can, just for form sake, leave your watch with him (to let him know it is no particular obligation) till I can send one of the servants to my lodgings for money.' And with these words on his lips, he commenced guiding me to a small room on the ground floor, where Mr. Steward, to oblige his lordship's particular friend, lent me 40*l.*, and I placed in his hands the watch, which in my sober senses, I would not have parted with to ward off starvation. On our return to the drawing-room his lordship called on me to take my seat, which I did; the cards were dealt, and I was very speedily minus thirty-five out of my forty pounds; and I was about losing the other five, when a man rushed into the room and vociferated something which set host and guests in instant dismay; in a moment the lights were extinguished, and there was a general rush, in which I joined, thinking the house was on fire. 'Catch hold, Bob,' said somebody as I was hurried past near where the table stood at which I had seen my friend

with the rake; and a heavy bag was placed in my arms. 'This way, Bob,' said somebody else, seizing hold of my arm and pulling me in darkness down a very narrow stair-case, until I knew that I was under-ground by the damp effluvia which proceeded from the earth. 'Come on,' cried my guide, 'by God they are behind us—*sauve qui peut!*' and off he shot, while I at the same time stumbled over something, and rolled violently against the wall, where I stood for a moment or two vainly trying to rally my fugitive senses. As I was about to proceed again, a something sparkling on the ground through the darkness caught my eye, and I stooped and picked it up; when judge my astonishment to find it was my own watch! which no doubt was dropped by the honest steward in his flight.

"I need not say that, drunk as I was, I was right glad to get it into my guardianship again, and I deposited it, chain and all, very safely at the bottom of the fob, before I budged further, and, that done, set out again on my journey. 'And what the devil is this in my arms?' said I—'shade of Blackstone!—but it feels like money; and where got I it, and where am I?'—and I actually began to doubt if I was myself, when, hearing a clatter in the rear, and thinking the house was falling in, I thrust the bag under my coat, supporting it with my arm, and rushing forward as fast as my legs would carry me, I found myself speedily in the open air, but where, in particular, I have never been able to divine; and after various wanderings, occupying an hour or better, I discovered King Charles, as usual, at his eternal trot at Charing-Cross, and, in a quarter of an hour, reached my chambers considerably sobered. Of course, I lost no time in examining the bag, which I found to contain two hundred and thirty sovereigns, and, on inspecting my watch, I found it had only sustained a slight bruise or two, and the loss of the glass; and I then began to meditate on my night's adventure, coming, finally, to the reasonable conclusion, that my worthy friend was a sharper, that my Lord B.'s was nothing more than a hell, and that his lordship and his *confrères* had been disturbed by the police.

"Well, gentlemen, I, next day, caused inquiries to be made at the house where I had dined in Park-street, for the person



who had been my host there; but I learnt that he was an accidental lodger, of whom they knew nothing, and that he had left there that morning. I inquired at the police-offices, and of the various parish authorities at the west end, if any officers had been sent, on the preceding night, to any houses of play, and as they all assured me that none had been sent, I concluded that the good people had had a false alarm. I next advertised the affair, in terms sufficiently ambiguous to be understood only by some of those concerned, desiring any, having a claim to money in the bag, to apply to A. B., at the Law Stationer's, Inner Temple-lane; but I suppose the locality brought visions of traps, and attorneys, and prosecutions, to their minds, for I had no application; and so, after waiting a reasonable time, I applied the money to my business, and, from that beginning, have gone on successfully till now, and I may say I owe my present fortune, a comfortable one, to being well walloped (to use my old friend Gabriel Gammon's words) in the first instance, and, in the next, to my being without a shilling on a sunshiny day."

The attorney concluded, and we drank his health, wishing the player, at the same time, the luck to be swindled to the same tune. "I am too old a hand, gentlemen," he answered. "I doubt whether I altogether look the kind of simple purse-bearing lad that a Rutlandshire squire, with a friend in hell, would select from a seat in the Park for his operations; however," he added, "I think I may be permitted to say that this gentleman's words, as well as those who have preceded him, and my humble own, have borne out the remark I commenced with, that our destinies move on almost imperceptible pivots." A general assent followed this observation; after which, as it had become very late, we separated for the night; and, in the morning, we separated again, perhaps for ever—but, even if it should be so, I doubt whether we shall not rest in each other's memories, till memory is no more.

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## MINNIE GREY.

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GEORGE BRACKENBURY was the younger son of Sir Thomas Brackenbury, of Brackenbury Hall, in the village of Asterisks, in the county of Blank. His elder brother, Mr. Thomas Brackenbury, being one of that numerous class of whom it may be said emphatically that they are "born to die,"—being moreover, heir to the title and estate, and destined to support and transmit the honour and glory of all the Brackenburys, from the time of the Norman William to that of William the Fourth—had every possible care bestowed on his education. That is to say, he was carefully taught to ride with the skill of a twopenny post-boy, and the grace of his father's huntsman—to leap a five-bar gate without even so much as breaking an arm or a leg—to shoot almost as well as a gamekeeper—to look down with sublime contempt upon all the youthful yeomanry and peasantry of the district—to swear by the honour of the house of Brackenbury—and to switch his groom across the face if his horse's coat had a hair awry. He was, moreover, profoundly instructed in the modern languages—from the loud and high-sounding Huntsmanic, down through all the various dialects of the Caballasi-nian, even to groomic and stable-boyic.

But Mr. George, being a younger brother—a sort of encumbrance on the estate, to be got rid of as cheaply and expeditiously as was consistent with the dignity of the family—was to be attached to some profession. They dared not make him a barrister, lest he should prove a simpleton, and getting no fees, remain a burden upon the honour of the Head of the house of

Brackenbury; therefore, to make all secure in case he should turn out a fool, they resolved to make him a parson. They were right.

The mind of this young gentleman, modified by his physical organization, was, like his person, elegantly turned and delicately constructed—but it was, in both cases, at the expense of capacity and vigour. The tone of his mind, by a retrograde effect, gave daily fresh and added influence to the cause by which it was itself produced, by withdrawing its possessor from participation in the hardy and athletic exercises of robust youths, in which he felt hopeless to excel; and by inducing him to seek the more alluring but enervating pleasures of legendary reading. These were the more congenial to his temper, and the better calculated to increase his morbid delicacy of mind and body, because they were obtainable without the toil of either mental or bodily exertion. Thus the physical and moral man, acting reciprocally on each other, the lines of his character became daily deepened, and its peculiarities more marked and manifest.

Thus constituted within and without, it is not surprising that, while his schoolmates were wooing health and strength at prison-base, cricket, or camping ball, Brackenbury, quietly ensconced in a nook of his study, (for George was a study-boy,) was galloping over the green sward at the bridle-rein of Diana Vernon, or shouting and weeping with Vivian Grey over the lifeless form of his beautiful Violet Fane. His fondness for reading and apparent effeminacy speedily made him any thing but a favourite with the school mobility, who characterized him by the terms “mawther,” “Moll Brackenbury,” “Miss Brackenbury,” and sundry other school-boy appellatives expressive of school-boy contempt. This caused him to attach himself with greater exclusiveness than ever to the dreamy pleasures of his darling fiction.

Such, then, as we have described him, was George Brackenbury, when he entered himself a fellow-commoner at St. John's Cambridge. And such he continued to be in person elegant and delicately slight, so as almost to incur the charge of effeminacy—with a mind like a piece of glass, for the dullest observer

could see through it—like an unskinned wound, for the slightest impression pained it—like a snow-wreath, so exquisitely clean itself, that every thing around it seemed dirty.

When he had kept terms at Cambridge, for about two years, an aunt, a widow lady of some property, died, leaving George the uncontrolled possessor of an income of three hundred a-year. He now sat himself down seriously to consider what he should do. The result of his cogitation was a resolution to leave Cambridge at once, and repair to some secluded part of the country, where he hoped to find a race of beings living in primitive simplicity, uncorrupted by the contamination of cities and towns, tending sheep the only amusement, and love the only business of their lives. Filled with this idea, and having made the necessary preparations, he mounted the Lynn coach, and, about five in the evening, alighted at the Castle Inn, at Downham, in the county of Norfolk. On the following morning he started in a post-chaise for Shingham; a remote village, situated at a considerable distance from the high road, and in a district which he had heard was in a high degree pastoral, and the manners of whose inhabitants he therefore concluded must be, in the same degree, primitive and simple. Having arrived within a couple of miles of Shingham, he dismissed the chaise, and, inquiring the way, proceeded on foot. In the nature of the district he was not deceived, for the land is so sandy and barren, that no animal but a sheep, and no sheep but a Norfolk sheep, could subsist upon it. It consists of extensive plains or heaths, and on these, large flocks of sheep under the care of shepherds, are grazed all day, and enclosed in a fold of hurdles all night. What, to a mind like Brackenbury's, would give an additional charm to the kind of life these shepherds lead, is the fact that they are not paid in money, but are allowed to have some sixty or seventy sheep of their own, feeding with the rest of the flock. This gives them the appearance of independence, and divests them, in some measure, of the unromantic character of servants paid for their labour.

After half an hour's brisk walking over one of these heaths, he came in sight of a plantation of firs, a cottage, and at a little distance to the right, a church, having something of the figure

and magnitude of a grotto of oyster-shells on a first of August in London. The plantation of firs was at the back of the cottage, and close to it. As he threw his eyes over the heath, he discovered, at some distance, an old man slowly following a flock of sheep, which were kept in the proper direction by the perpetual yelping and circumgyrations of his dog. His crook was fastened to a leathern belt round his body, and was trailing on the ground behind him, while his hands were actively employed in knitting (as George afterwards found) a new foot to an old stocking. Our hero's heart palpitated with delight. As he approached still nearer to the cottage he descried the shepherd's wife, as he naturally supposed her, just outside the door, sitting at a spinning-wheel; and ere he had proceeded five paces further, his crowning wish of all was realized in the shape of a beautiful young village maiden, (for he felt it impossible that she could be otherwise than beautiful,) in appearance about seventeen or eighteen. She was neatly dressed, with a little straw hat on her head, the strings of which were untied; and in her hand she carried a tin kit, (containing probably her father's dinner,) and away she went tripping over the plain, in the direction in which the old man was driving his sheep. Brackenbury instantly diverged from the path leading to the cottage, in order to meet and introduce himself to this enchanting apparition. Minnie Grey, both in heart and person, was a perfect specimen of all that woman ought and was intended to be. Her beauty and her heart were alike. Neither was in the Madonna or the queenly style, but of that soft, and yielding, and trusting kind, which is the *nec plus ultra* of female witchery. Her lips, which resembled nothing so much as a parted cherry, seemed made expressly for kissing; her hair was clustering and light brown; and the contour of her figure, though slender and graceful, was yet so rounded, and conveyed an idea of such softness, that the gazer was almost tempted to believe her constructed altogether without bone. Her hands and fingers, those terrible blemishes in most rustic beauties, were (the former) soft, small, and white, the latter long, slender, and evenly proportioned, for they had never been injured by domestic drudgery, but were constantly employed in plaiting straw,

which required them to be kept always scrupulously clean.

Such was the beautiful and gentle being whom Brackenbury now met on the edge of the heath that skirted the plantation of firs. Addressing her with great respect, he inquired for the village of Shingham.

"This is Shingham, sir," replied Minnie; and, pointing behind her a little to the right of the cottage, added, "that is Shingham church."

"But I do not see the houses," said George.

"My father's cottage, sir, is the only one it contains," was the answer.—They walked on. It was the month of June, and the whole plain was covered with the purple heath-bell, over which the bees were hovering and humming, the monotonous and saddening sound of which was only interrupted by the distant and plaintive bleating of the sheep, and the angerless bark of their friendly keeper.

"What a beautiful and still scene!" said George, musing—and then added, "to live, and love, and die in!" They walked on. "I am come," continued he, "into this peaceful and secluded neighbourhood in the hope to find here the happiness and interchange of kindly feeling, which I have vainly sought in the busy town and crowded city." They walked on. "With a heart"—thus he proceeded; for he was now under the influence of one of his dreamy and melancholy reveries, induced by the quiet sadness of the surrounding scenery—"with a heart overflowing with affection for all that is fair and good, when I sought to win friends for the sole luxury of loving and being loved, I found friendship but another name for self-interest," (Minnie's eyes began to fill,) "and beauty"—stopping and pointing to a glittering snake that lay on their path—"like that!" added he. They were now near to the old shepherd, and stepping up to him, Brackenbury shortly expressed his wish to reside for a time in that neighbourhood, and inquired whether he could be accommodated in his cottage. The shepherd of Shingham was a hale man of about sixty-five years of age; his long white hair fell curling over the collar of his coat, and his general appearance was venerable. His character was what his habits had made it. For fifty years his sole employment had

been tending sheep on the heath about Shingham. In reply to Brackenbury's inquiry, he said, they had a chamber which they never used, which he might have if his wife had no objection. After a little further conversation, in which our sentimentalist sought to win the old man's favour by speaking in praise of the shepherd's life, complimenting him on the appearance of his sheep, the sagacity of his dog, etc., he, accompanied by Minnie, strolled towards the cottage.

In their way thither, he did not fail to entreat her to intercede for him with her mother.

"If," said he, "I am to find happiness any where on this side the grave, I feel it must be here."

Minnie readily promised to do what she could; for from the sadness of his tone and manner she thought he must have sustained some great misfortune, and a wish to contribute to its alleviation was no more than a natural female impulse. When they had nearly reached the shepherd's habitation, Minnie tripped on before and spoke to her mother, who was still busy at her wheel. When, therefore, George approached her, he had little else to do than listen. The kind-hearted old lady instantly began—"Lawk! sir, I am sure you won't like to live in a little bit of a hut like ours! Besides, the chamber has not been cleaned for this month, and is all over cobwebs and stive; and though to be sure the chamber might soon be cleaned, there is no bed."

"If there be a bed to be had within ten miles," said George, "I will bring it on my back, rather than forego the pleasure of living on a spot on which I have set my heart."

"And then there's the living," continued she; "there's never a butcher's shop nearer than Beacham Well; but to be sure, Minnie could easily step up there, and——"

"My dear Mrs. Grey," said he, taking her hand, (for he had learned the name from Minnie,) "I have not come into this sequestered place to seek things which I could more easily have found in that which I have left. I have come hither because I love quiet and seclusion—because I prefer the simple fare and humble habits of the shepherd, to the comparative splendour and luxury to which I have been accustomed—the society of

kindly hearts to the company of heartless worldlings. Let me have your little room—let me eat with you, drink with you, rest with you, and, if it may be, share your affections. At this moment, excepting your own family, there is not a living being in the wide world who knows or cares whether I am alive or dead.”

The old lady's heart melted, and Minnie's eyes began once more to twinkle. But, to cut the matter short, in a few days he found himself, to his heart's content, securely established in the family. His whole life was now like the realization of a delicious dream. The entire day was spent wandering about with the lovely and gentle Minnie, in the most lonely and secluded spots; sometimes slowly pursuing their listless and uncertain way across the more remote parts of the neighbouring heaths, sometimes threading the devious tracks of the dusky woods, or resting for hours together on the trunk of some uprooted tree. On these occasions it was Brackenbury's part to talk, and Minnie's to listen; and Minnie thought she could have listened for ever. The melancholy music of his language, with the wonders it unfolded, fell upon her ear like the voice of some being of another sphere, while he explained to her the anatomy of a flower growing at their feet, spoke of the splendid and gaudy colouring of the exotics of other climes, described the manners of the inhabitants of far-off countries, the savage cruelty of the aboriginal Americans, the soft lasciviousness of the Otaheitan—when, as the moon's pale thin crescent became faintly visible on the clear blue of the evening sky, he unfolded, in a general outline, to the amazed and awe-struck simplicity of her mind, the stupendous wonders of astronomy—when he assured her that they themselves were whirling away, at that moment, at the rate of more than four hundred miles a minute—when he told her, that by going down to the bottom of her father's well she might see the stars at noon-day almost as well as at dark night—when he pointed out to her some of the more brilliant planets and stars, calling each by its name—spoke of their being inhabited as of an unquestionable fact—when he described to her the mountain of Venus, its figure, its height—is it wonderful that poor Minnie sometimes really fancied her



companion some being of a brighter world than this?—an inhabitant of some one of those very stars with which he seemed so well acquainted? That passage of Scripture, it is very certain, frequently occurred to her mind, in which the angels of heaven are said to have loved, wooed, and won the daughters of men. Minnie was sadly puzzled—terrible suspicions would sometimes cross her mind: what if this beautiful stranger should prove to be one of those very angels come down to Shingham in search of a wife?

Thus situated, wandering about for ever, side by side—unseen, unheard by mortal eye or ear, and frequently at a distance of miles from any human habitation—their young hearts brimming with impetuous affections, and ready, at any instant, to overflow—each regarding the other as the most beautiful being they had ever beheld—both perpetually under the dissolving influence of the scenery around them, where the voice of stillness, like that of conscience, felt, not heard, was ever humming its drowsy song, lulling all things to repose—it is no wonder that they sometimes felt as though they themselves were the only human beings the world contained; and that their feelings soon became like two streams gushing from the same fountain, and only separated by a barrier which the continually augmented power of the currents was every instant wearing thinner and thinner, until the slightest accident should be sufficient to overwhelm it, and mingle the rushing waters into one. Such an accident soon happened—and one summer evening, the twilight had deepened into darkness, as they found themselves silently and slowly retracing their steps. Minnie's left arm was drawn as far as it would reach round George's waist, and held in that position by his left hand locked in hers, while his own right arm, encircling her almost completely, was barely sufficient to support her from falling—so much had she been exhausted by the burst of feeling, which had well nigh broken the chain which held form and spirit together. They reached home. The old folks had been somewhat alarmed, but their fears were at an end as soon as they entered. They had often been late before; though, perhaps, never so late as on the present night. After this time they still continued to revel in the same luxurious in-

dolence ; but a nice observer would not have failed to remark a slight difference in their manners. They now evidently understood themselves and each other ; there was less of that dreamy silence between them, and more external joy. When they walked, too, it was always with their arms round each other's waist, and when they rested they now no longer *sat*, but threw themselves at their length upon the soft and fragrant heather, and lay watching the birds as they flitted over them, till, not unfrequently, they watched themselves to sleep. They were *extremely* happy ; but *extremes* meet. Let no one congratulate himself on being *extremely* happy, for he is within one step of becoming miserable.

Three months of such blissful feeling as is seldom experienced, except in dreams, had now glided away. Another slight change came over the manners of one of the party—of Brackenbury. When they walked he did not now *always* throw his arm round her waist ; when reclining on the heath with Minnie by his side, he fell asleep sooner than formerly—he did not rise so early in the morning as he was used to do—he proposed to return home earlier in the evening. But Minnie was far too deeply absorbed in her own happiness to notice these alterations of manner—trivial in themselves, yet fraught with tremendous meaning to her. Brackenbury himself began to be conscious of a change of feeling—he began to be sensible of the oppression of too much happiness. His dreams of seclusion had all been gratified abundantly. The excitement of hope and expectation no longer existed. He began to congratulate himself that Minnie had not yet shown any evidence of a consciousness of his changing feelings ; a circumstance which, until now, had never occurred to his mind. In a short time he would be obliged to go to Cambridge to replenish his purse. He was pleased at this. A month ago he would have *written* for the money, had he then wanted it. He began to doubt whether he loved Minnie as well as he fancied ; and to suspect that his feelings towards her were only the result of time and opportunity. He mistook the weariness of monotony for real indifference. The truth is, he loved her as *well*, though not as *passionately*, as ever, and if a rival had crossed his path, he would instantly have become sensible of

this. It was the excitement of novelty which he missed, which must, of course, always cease when the once untried sentiment, so ardently sought for, has been long possessed. He thought, after all, he did not love Minnie. For all George's knowledge of the human heart had been derived from books of romance, according to which beauty never fades and passion never dies. He endeavoured to try the state of his feelings, by fancying Minnie in the arms of another. He could not endure the thought. This puzzled him. Then came the thought of poor Minnie herself. If he left her, how would she bear it? True, in all eyes but their own, she was the same pure being as ever. He called to mind every musty old proverb he could think of, about the fickleness and lightness of woman's love. All would not do—his utmost ingenuity failed him here. Minnie would die. All he could do, he could not hide himself from the full conviction that poor Minnie would certainly *die*. Under this impression, he came to the determination in which weak minds always seek refuge—he would not *think* about it; besides he did not yet know what he meant to do. He might yet come back to her. He thought he should—in fact, he felt sure he would. O how selfish and tyrannical is the very best of human hearts!

The day of his departure arrived. They separated at a stile half way between Shingham and Beacham Well, from whence Brackenbury was to take a chaise to Downham. He was surprised and disappointed at the cheerfulness with which she kissed him, and bade him good-by. But Minnie's inexperience had left her no better guide, by which to judge of the hearts of others, than that which her own afforded her; and, consequently, she had no more doubt of seeing him again on the day appointed, than she had of seeing him in the morning, when he went to-bed at night.

When he mounted the Cambridge coach, on the following morning, his mind was in the same wavering condition—his thoughts and intentions vague and *uncertain*, as before. He seemed to himself to be weary of Minnie, yet could not bear the thought of her loving another. The fact is, he was weary of himself. He felt an uneasy want of something, yet knew not what. He wanted novelty, excitement—something to wish

to obtain; something to fear to lose—novelly in any shape.

When he had arrived at Cambridge, his banker informed him that his brother had been dead a month, that his father was dangerously ill, and that he himself had been advertised. As his intentions had assumed no definite shape, he had laid down no rule of conduct. He had settled no mode of correspondence with Minnie in case of his detention by accident. Indeed, this would have been difficult, for poor Minnie could not read writing, and George's sensitive mind would have shrunk with disgust from the idea of having his love-letters pored over by a third party. When, therefore, his banker advised him to post down to his father's seat immediately, he agreed at once to do so. His arrangement with Minnie, to be at Shingham on a certain day, formed no obstacle to his doing this, for he had not yet made up his mind as to whether he meant ever to go again. He found the old gentleman confined to his bed, from which it was clear he could never rise. The doctors proved satisfactorily that he ought to have died a month ago, but his hardy constitution held out. The gentlemen of the neighbouring estates, with their wives and daughters, came frequently to inquire after him. But George saw that all this was mere matter of form; he saw that they did not care a straw whether his father lived or died. Amongst the young ladies several were handsome; but they affected him only as fine statues would have done. They seemed to him cold and stony, and, altogether, to want the warmth and winning softness of the kind-hearted Minnie. It never occurred to him that this might only be the result of the necessary tribute which they were compelled to pay to what is called decorum. He already began to weary of his new position. He now began to recollect that the time was considerably overpast when he promised to meet Minnie, and that, nevertheless, a distance of nearly three hundred miles separated them. "Poor Minnie!" said he; but something occurred to attract his attention, and he willingly cut short the reflection.

Two months had passed away since he saw her, and he determined to go to her, and explain his situation. But the old gentleman was taken worse—he could not leave him without a

great breach of decency. Every day, it was asserted by the doctors, would be his last; yet he held out three weeks longer, and George was on the point of starting when he died. This event, of course, put a stop to his journey.

Minnie was now never out of his mind; as he wandered about the garden and grounds, his fancy would draw her picture. She sat by the window of her father's cottage with her head on her hand, and her elbow resting on a pillow on the table beside her. She was looking through the window along the path leading to Beacham Well. She was thin, but not haggard. In her eye sat hopeless resignation. He tried to shut out the picture from his mind. But it had only the effect of changing, not banishing it. She recurred again, in the likeness of Shakspeare's Ophelia. George moved rapidly towards the stables. By the time he had reached them, however, he recollected that it would be impossible to go to Shingham and back before the funeral.

In a few days the funeral took place. From this time he had no leisure for thought. He was now Sir George Brackenbury, and possessor of the family estates. There were deeds and parchments of every dimension to be looked over with the attorney and steward; there were legacies to be paid; there were new leases to be granted to tenants; new tenants to be accepted; the estates to be ridden over; but, above all, he was to offer himself a candidate for his father's vacant seat in parliament. The very morning after the funeral, his attorney, attended by Mr. Girling, his father's steward, presented himself. Sir George yielded, lost much time and much money, and was, ultimately, defeated.

He now became thoroughly convinced that he could not live happily, perhaps not live at all, without Minnie Grey. But he had horrible forebodings as to the state in which he should find her. He could not bear the thought of losing her, and yet he would certainly have been disagreeably disappointed to find her in perfect health. Yet, notwithstanding all his anxiety, with the moral cowardice peculiar to such characters, he shunned the opportunity of satisfying his doubts. At length, however, he threw

himself into a post-chaise, and started for Shingham. But we must precede him.

He had left Shingham on a Monday morning, and had promised to meet Minnie at the stile, half-way between Shingham and Beacham Well, exactly at seven o'clock on the evening of the following Saturday. Old Time hobbled away with the four intervening days on his back (Minnie thought), as though the soles of his feet were studded all over with corns. Nevertheless he did, at last, contrive to carry them off. The hour of six arrived, and found the undoubting Minnie standing by the stile so often mentioned, and watching the path leading to Beacham Well. She waited, as nearly as she could guess, the lapse of an hour. Brackenbury did not appear. She crossed the stile, and before she had quite settled the question, as to whether she should go on to Beacham Well or not, she found herself already there, and inquiring at the post-house, from which George had taken a post-chaise, what was the hour? Minnie was both astonished and delighted to hear that it still wanted a quarter to seven. She walked slowly back—she reached the stile; then, turning, cast a wistful look along the footpath. No one appeared; Minnie sighed, as she thought, for the first time, occurred that, perhaps, he would not come. But she repelled it instantly, as something she dared not look upon. Time wore on; it occurred again, and again she repelled it. But it continued to return at shorter and shorter intervals, till she could no longer resist it. She felt conviction, like a burglar, steal into her soul. For a while helpless and hopeless grief, like a palpable desolation, fell upon her heart, withering her strength,—her very being seemed crumbling away like a ruin. But, in a little time, she began to gather up the fragments, and, by the time she had reached her father's cottage, she could have rendered twenty excellent reasons why it was impossible that George could have come that night.

The next night, and for thirty successive nights—Alas! poor Minnie! why should I chronicle thy woes? Why put a window in the broken tabernacle of thy heart, the more fully to expose its hallowed rites to the rude stare of a scoffing world? They are registered in heaven, and, at the last great day, when

the accusing angel exhibits his calendar of offences, assuredly what thou didst then suffer shall be remembered in thy favour.

On the thirty-second evening, as she was going out on her daily errand of disappointment, in passing through the doorway, she could not raise her foot high enough to pass the threshold. She tripped, and fell. Her mother now absolutely refused to suffer her to leave the house. But, at her earnest request, she placed her on a chair by the window, and setting a small table beside her, on which was a pillow; she was thus enabled to indulge the only pleasure which now remained to her—that of watching the path for the appearance of him who was far away.

From that time forward this was her daily occupation; but for a moment, let us recur to Brackenbury.

Sir George Brackenbury approached Shingham by the same route by which he had visited it on the first occasion, and not by the path leading to Beacham Well; and, as at first, when arrived within about two miles, he dismissed the chaise, and proceeded on foot. When the cottage, with its surrounding scenery, came in sight, he slackened his pace, and made a little detour to the left, that he might enjoy the associations which every thing he saw awakened in his memory. There stood the cottage just as he had left it—there the little church, the plantation of firs, the broad heath. Every thing remained unaltered. He began to ask himself—for the cool evening air and the exercise of walking had given something like vigour to his mind—he began to ask himself, “Why should Minnie alone be changed? Surely the work of eight months cannot have done very much?” But he did not like to pursue the subject. He was now on the very spot on which he had first accosted her, and she began to flit before his imagination in all her early loveliness. Her large and loving eyes, her clustering hair, her moist and pouting lips, her full and rounded form—his fancy began to run riot in the rich feast he was about to enjoy.

It was a still Sabbath evening early in May. Minnie occupied her usual seat at the cottage window. But, O, how changed! Day and night, for eight months, the hectic locust had been busy at her heart. The breeze, that once had wanted power to

cool her flushed brow, now chilled her to shivering. Wasted and worn, she sat with her elbow on the pillow, which lay on a small table beside her, and her cheek resting on her hand. Her eyes were fixed upon a tear that had just fallen, and lay like a shattered star upon the other hand as it rested in her lap. The good curate of Beacham Well sat opposite to her—a Bible was open before him, and rested on one end of Minnie's pillow. The old shepherd and his wife sat in silent grief on either side of the large open chimney. The clergyman was reading aloud. Suddenly the startled voice of Minnie was heard exclaiming, with fearful rapidity of utterance—"What's that, mother?—what's that?" The latch of the door was lifted with a sudden and jarring sound behind her. In an instant Minnie had started up, and turning round, Brackenbury stood before her. With a wild cry of delight she sprang toward him—her arms were twisted round his neck; but her head fell back, her arms relaxed their grasp—she was dead!

Sir George Brackenbury, accompanied by the clergyman, was conveyed to the parsonage. Here he continued to reside for many months—ostensibly to watch over the comforts of the shepherd and his wife; but probably his real motive was, that he might enjoy the melancholy pleasure of wandering amid the scenes he had so often traversed with his lost Minnie.

At the close of the autumn, having erected a small plain monumental tablet over her grave, with the following epitaph:—"*Veni et amavit—abivi, et en! ubi jacet!—G. B.,*" and having ensured her parents against future want, as far as money could do so, he left the neighbourhood, adding one more to the thousand proofs that perfect happiness is incompatible with the conditions of humanity; and that he who will drain the cup of bliss to the very dregs, will always find bitterness at the bottom.

THE END.

















